

A N
A N A L Y S I S
OF THE
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES
OF
I R E L A N D,
PRIOR TO THE FIFTH CENTURY.
TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED, A
REVIEW OF THE GENERAL HISTORY
OF THE
C E L T I C N A T I O N S.


BY WILLIAM WEBB.

*Non mediocres enim tenebræ in sylva, uti hæc captanda ; neque
eo, quo pervenire volumus, semitæ tritæ, neque non in trami-
tibus quædam objecta, quæ euntem retinere possunt. VARRO.*

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P R E F A C E.

IT is not at present my intention to expatiate on the peculiarity of circumstances which distinguishes the subject I have undertaken to treat, the perplexity by which it is embarrassed, and the singular obscurity and contradiction in which it is so deeply involved. The appearance which it exhibits, and by which it has so long been characterized, is already but too generally known: and this appearance will render superfluous an apology for those critical disquisitions, of which it is the professed design, in some degree to dispel this confusion, to introduce simplicity, clearness, and precision, and to ascertain some fixed principles to serve as a basis for future investigations.

The following observations on the ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND are the result of an examination of this intricate subject, which was instituted merely from motives of curiosity. * They are now presented to the public

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* It is in a great measure to be ascribed to the perusal of the passage in the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, (vol. II, chap xxv. p. 434, et sequent. 8vo.) in which this subject is introduced by the eloquent historian, and of the critique in the *Monthly Review* for December, 1787, (*init*) which contains some

lic with a view to the satisfaction of those, who equally uninterested in the issue of the controversy, may however be inclined to inquire concerning a matter which has so long engrossed the attention of our own, and attracted the notice of foreign writers. Should they be found to possess no other claim to their regard, the merit, if it be a merit, of impartiality will at least be allowed them. Of this, it is presumed, the proofs will appear sufficiently obvious. The incitement to this inquiry was very different from the ambition of contending under the banners of a party, or enrolling myself as the votary of any particular hypothesis; and the event of it, is, in not a few points, very different from that, which I had been previously led to expect.

Unacquainted as I profess myself, with the Gaelic language, it will not be expected that I should come forward prepared to illude or to inform through the medium of *etymology*. On this subject I have in other places declared my sentiments; nor do I find any reason to retract what I have there advanced on the subject. By some, I am aware, these considerations will appear to spring more an unacquaintance with the language in question, than

some severe, and caustic, and not a few just strictures on the present state of this controversy, and the reprehensible conduct of some of our antiquarians. On recurring to that critique, I find it to be almost literally the *germ* of the following Analysis;— and that this work can be justified by the application of the principles which are there laid down, and from which no candid and unbiassed mind will withhold its assent, I consider as no immaterial evidence in favour of the general tenor of the system which is here delineated.

P R E F A C E.

than from a conviction arising from experience and unbiaſſed obſervation. But the approbation of theſe, in this point, I am not ſolicitous to gain, as *their* example is what I would propoſe to myſelf to avoid. I might, indeed, from lexicons and dictionaries produce ample ſtores for the purpoſe of raiſing the frail fabric of etymological ſyſtem; in the multiplicity of attempts in this line, it would be remarkable indeed, ſhould the whole *chance* to appear equally unſucceſſful; and without much exertion, without the ſmalleſt additional embarraſſment, it were thus practicable to exhibit a tolerable diſplay of verbal attainments. But it was my deſign to exhibit only thoſe arguments and thoſe facts, which have led me to adopt the concluſions, which I have ſubmitted to the view of the public. In the hands of the *mere* gloſſologiſt, my ſyſtem may receive a ſeeming corroboration; and it may, from a ſimilar quarter, and by the uſe of the ſame means, experience a rejection equally deſerved. But whatever be its merit, it will continue uninjured by ſuch attacks, and unsupported by ſuch aſſiſtance. The only criterion by which it is to be judged, is the ſtandard of argument, and hiſtoric facts: ſhould it be condemned by theſe, it makes no farther appeal.

“To conſent to be ignorant,” it has with juſtice been obſerved, “is an excellent method of obtaining wiſdom; and when an author confeſſes he is ſo, he puts in a ſtrong claim to the confidence of his reader.” How far
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I may be entitled to this indulgence, the public is to determine. The only apprehension which I entertain on this subject is, that the veteran antiquary, less conversant in the present state of things, than in the customs and habits of nations two thousand years ago, less qualified for the important business of deducing just and pertinent inferences from acknowledged and well known circumstances, than skilled in those minutiae, which are suffered to remain in neglect, because they are unworthy of attention, may be disposed to triumph over those slight inaccuracies, which a habitual disposition to dispute rejoices to detect or create, rather than to excuse them ; from such unimportant blemishes, to attempt to involve the whole in doubt ; and thus to prepare a decent pretext to excuse the unqualified rejection of the system at large. But whatever errors of this trivial nature may be discovered, I am confident they cannot affect any material position throughout. My view is to deduce *general* conclusions, and to lay down *general* positions. I do not therefore conceive that the correction of a trifling error, or the refutation of a particular train of reasoning, can possibly be productive of such material consequences, or that it can extend to such a degree, as to destroy the harmonious consistence, in which the various and independent branches of such an extensive system are so intimately connected.

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What mistakes I may have committed I am very free to correct, what weak reasoning to give up; “but (to use the expressions of a very ingenious author) I shall not think that a long chain of arguments, of proofs and probabilities is confuted at once, because some single fact may be found erroneous. Much less shall I be disposed to take notice of detached or trifling cavils. An inquiry into such a remote portion of our annals is mere matter of curiosity and speculation. If any man should take the trouble to review and canvass my arguments, I am ready to yield so indifferent a point to better reasons. Should declamation be used to contradict me, I shall not think I am less in the right.” *

This preface, so unavoidably tinged with egotism, (for in this controversy, PERSONS as well as THINGS are discussed) shall be concluded with an observation respecting the Review of the History of the Celtæ. The examination of so comprehensive a history, unconnected in a great measure with the general subject of the following sheets, is introduced for the purpose of supplying a deficiency for which I am greatly at a loss to account. The more palpable, which are, indeed, the more immaterial, faults of the writer whose opinions I have contested, have met with different perfections, not less deserved than severe: but that the attempts which he has made

* Walpole's Historic Doubts.

made to sap the foundation of European history, should pass without any suspicion of the propriety of his conduct; and that the perversion of that history which he has laboured to introduce, so far from being impugned, should meet with general ACQUIESCENCE, perhaps with general adoption, is not a little remarkable. A true statement of these singular attempts will appear obviously necessary to every attentive examiner: and to supply the deficiency, these observations on the subject, however inadequate to the purpose, are subjoined.

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 justify religiously Ireland is not singular. The

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 of their bards, have long charac-

terized the Irish mind. But the habit of being
 misled by the false and exaggerated accounts
 of their ancestors, which has been the cause of
 the present state of the nation, is a long

series of misapprehensions and delusions, events
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 of this peculiar state of the nation, by inclining them to

ANTIQUEITIES OF IRELAND.

of antiquities in the most glowing and
 romantic terms of national grandeur and
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 helped in this respect.

of those of their countrymen, in whose
 it was to contribute to their improvement.

THERE are few nations which have not,
 during the course of their progress from rude-
 ness to refinement, endeavoured to conceal the
 insignificance of their real origin, under the
 veil of romance and fiction. Their attempts,
 however, to bury in oblivion their pristine bar-
 barism and ignorance, though, in the infancy
 of real knowledge, they may have been receiv-
 ed with implicit respect, have, in proportion to
 the diffusion of science and civilization, been
 most commonly consigned to neglect. To such
 nations it is of little moment whether their
 origin were mean or illustrious, as they are more
 occupied with their present grandeur, than with
 an imaginary, or at best, doubtful delineation
 of ancient splendor and glory.

In her attempts, therefore, to ascertain an illustrious antiquity, Ireland is not singular. The love of national grandeur, and a fondness for an acquaintance with the achievements of their ancestors, as disguised and adorned in the songs of their fileas and bards, have long characterized that nation. But, instead of being weakened by the present happy diffusion of knowledge, this general attachment seems to be still cherished as much as in less refined periods. A long series of unhappy and destructive events appears to have been, in a great measure, the cause of this peculiarity, by inclining them to turn from the scenes of commotion and intestine tumult, which they daily witnessed, to the contemplation of ages, pictured in the most glowing and romantic terms of national grandeur and felicity. And it is easy to conceive, that the pleasure, which they experienced from dwelling on the interesting theme, would not be, by any means, damped through the stubborn historical integrity of those of their countrymen, in whose power it was to contribute to their enjoyment of this gratification.

Thus circumstanced, and with these dispositions, it was natural for them to forget, that, by indulging the passion for an illustrious and splendid antiquity, they substituted romance in the room of history, and that every additional ornament was a farther deviation from truth. Though, therefore, the accounts of their ancestors are peculiarly fabulous and obscure, they cannot even yet prevail on themselves to look on the pile of fiction which they have amassed, in any light different from that in which it is represented by their prejudices and their vanity.

Yet are the historical antiquities of Ireland of a nature very different from those of most other

other nations, and it is only by following the dictates of national pride, that their writers have by degrees caused them to assume a dress more conformable to that generally worn by fable and the offspring of imagination. To this peculiarity it is perhaps owing that the exaggerated and self-refuted tales of their ancient bards have been so long tolerated by those who view them uninfluenced by any motives except those excited by curiosity. In an age distinguished by a general diffusion of science and philosophy, and at a period when the long received fabrications of credulity and ignorance, are condemned to oblivion, frequent notices have been taken of this subject by men eminent for learning and genius, and among the studious and inquisitive, there seems a general wish, that it should be divested of the obscurity in which it is so deeply involved, so that it might come within the bounds of credibility, and no longer repel curiosity by its offences against history and against reason.

But whatever caution may be used not to provoke national jealousy by the exercise of a too general and undistinguishing scepticism, it is impossible to agree with them concerning the gorgeous fabric which this nation has long endeavoured to erect. According to their writers, Ireland was anciently inhabited by a people, wise, polished and great; who derived their origin from a remote country, the primary seat of civilization and science, and who after various migrations, subsequent to their departure from the southern parts of Asia, their original residence, at length arrived at this distant and sequestered island. These were, they assert, the inventors of letters, the instructors of Greece, and the first who enlarged the sphere of commerce by
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their knowledge and skill in maritime affairs. Of the splendor and refinement which obtained among them in ages long anterior to Roman or Grecian politeneis, we have accounts equally flattering. And to crown the whole, we are introduced to a series of their monarchs, and made acquainted with the various achievements which signalized their respective reigns, through a period of not less than eleven hundred years before the christian æra.

Such are a few of the most probable features in a delineation of the ancient history of Ireland, the inhabitants of which are, notwithstanding, stigmatized by foreign writers of the most early times, as barbarous, uncivilized, and ignorant, and represented in every respect different from the people described by their own historians. This contrariety, the extravagance of their pretensions, and the irreconcilable inconsistencies observable in their historical system, have long prevented the acknowledgment of its authenticity. Nevertheless, though fraught with absurdity and contradiction, it has still so far occupied the attention of those, whom in other respects it does not interest, as to be deemed a subject of curiosity; nor have all the unfavourable appearances which thus combine to oppress it, been sufficient to procure for it that oblivion, which it seems on every account to deserve.

To censure those who have so frequently trodden before me the field of Irish Antiquities, is a task not less invidious than it is disagreeable. But the manner in which their researches have been too generally conducted, justly merits reprehension. Biassed, in their judgment through the illusion of national vanity, those who support this ill-constructed system, have continued
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for a long series of time, to tread the same dull round, to attempt to force on others an implicit reliance on whatever fragments may be produced of the baseless compositions of their ancient bards, and to declaim on their visionary pretensions to a splendid antiquity. Every circumstance which might have a tendency to give a more rational turn to their inquiries, they have been accustomed to reject; while every fable, every system, however fanciful, every confused and ambiguous hint, and in particular, every *opinion* which they may deem favourable, has been gleaned with unremitting assiduity.

The effects of such a mode of conducting historical disquisition must be sensibly perceived; and were we to examine how far they may have counteracted the advantages arising from their laborious researches, perhaps the disparity would appear but small. Their adoption of principles wholly inadmissible; their dependence on the most strained and fanciful etymology,* and their substitution of declamation for argument, have had consequences, the inconveniences of which can be obviated only by the most essential services. When men see the stores of neglected and useless *erudition*, which from time to time have been accumulated, with the design of reconciling these contradictory exaggerations, when they reflect on the usual fate of those systems, equally absurd, which have so frequently engaged the attention of learning and genius, for the purpose, it should seem, of affording a display of those estimable qualifications; and, when they combine with these unfavourable appearances, the frequency of similar fictions in the annals of almost every civilized nation, and the unimportance of speculations conducted with such labour, and with so little success, it is natural

* See Note A, at the end of the volume.

tural that they should be induced to pay very little attention to a history which continues to baffle every attempt to ascertain its authenticity, and to separate from it the mass of fiction, by which its importance is so exceedingly depreciated.

Still further, to oppress the credit of Irish antiquities, a succession of learned writers, of a neighbouring country, has long been endeavouring to overthrow the pretensions of this nation, with all the zeal of men actuated by national prejudice, and eager to build on the ruins of a visionary system, another more flattering to their own vanity. To accomplish their purpose, however, it is to be regretted, that many of these writers have not stopped at the fair and open use of those means so abundantly supplied by fiction, and the remoteness of antiquity. Prevarication and sophistry, misquotation and other measures, equally disingenuous, the public has discovered that they adopted. But it is remarkable, that this unjustifiable conduct has been the principal obstruction to the success of their project. A discovery of such artifices, though it could not reconcile the candid to the pretensions of Irish antiquaries, induced a well-grounded suspicion, that the system of the Scottish writers was not more defensible.

To bear up against such a concurrence of unfavourable circumstances, requires all the support of truth, and all the assistance of sound reasoning, and logical precision. The ancient history of Ireland must withstand the investigation of criticism; it must bear the additional weight of a profusion of gorgeous fiction, and extravagant inconsistency; it must support the keen and penetrating eye of national prejudice; it must struggle with the assaults of argument, and
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the attacks of ridicule. And yet, to secure it against the force of such powerful opponents, it has hitherto been fated to have for its defenders, those, who instead of contending for its authenticity on rational and admissible grounds, confine themselves to an unseasonable display of useless erudition, and the exercise of self-refuted declamation; and who, instead of giving up those parts of it, which are obviously the work of fiction, and which can be separated from the main structure without the smallest inconvenience, contend for what is equally irreconcilable with every historical record, and every principle of common sense.

The only solution which has been hitherto attempted, of the many doubts with which this subject is encumbered, while it opposes the grandeur of the Irish, does not satisfy the vanity of the Scots. It is, in fact, having recourse to the expedient of cutting a knot, which different attempts have shewn the difficulty of unloosing. By the partizans of either system this attempt is equally opposed; nor is it probable that the disquisitions of a Beaufort, a Ledwich, and a Campbell, however replete with ingenuity and learning, will speedily terminate this long contested controversy. To convince, it is necessary to undeceive. But this is a point not to be attained by irony or declamation. Even these writers have imbibed all the prejudices of party, and contribute, by ill-placed invective, and too frequently by personal allusion, to obscure, instead of elucidating the subject of discussion. Hence, instead of cool and candid disquisition, we every where meet with little else than the violence of personal warfare, and the keenness of particular insult. Whatever may remain of argument is exhausted in digressory skirmishes.

skirmishes relative to trifles, which would require discussions as profound, as subjects of the first importance; and which, notwithstanding, can be productive of but little advantage.

That the antiquities of this kingdom, when thus treated, should emerge from their original obscurity, would indeed be strange; and it would not be less surprising, were we to find them in any other condition than that of a chaos of rudeness, of contradictory asseverations, and undetermined controversies. That this is their present state, is too obvious to be controverted. And it is much to be apprehended, while the subject continues to be discussed by parties thus hostile, and thus mutually opposing what each other may have advanced, that it will become proportionably embarrassed. Instead of fixing on a few of the principal and leading circumstances, and making these the foundation of their inquiries, much time and pains are fruitlessly employed on inferior and more trifling particulars. And yet, as has been remarked, trifling as these may appear, they require an investigation not less minute, than those to which they are subordinate; and after all, they must be determined by the fate of the principal circumstances. To these principal circumstances, no extraordinary attention appears to have been paid; and with little exception, such topics as the authenticity of the Irish annals, the evidences of an early acquaintance with letters, the state of civilization and refinement in the early periods of the national history, have been placed nearly on a level with others of far less importance. No comprehensive view has been taken of these leading particulars, from a collation of the various circumstances on which a just decision might be supported, because these cir-
cumstances

cumstances have been considered too much in the light of batteries, from whence the strength of a party might be displayed, or the weakness of an adversary insulted.

To pass on the writings of such antiquaries, animadversions of this nature, is certainly a most invidious task; and they are extorted only by a conviction of their justice, and of the ill consequences which spring from the measures which these eminent writers continue to pursue. They are not hazarded without the most deliberate consideration, and a consciousness of the disagreeable situation in which the writer of these sheets is involved. But without noticing the subject as he has done, it was impossible for him to account for the present singular state of antiquarian researches in this nation; and without pointing out the errors into which he apprehends his predecessors may have been betrayed, he could not justify his departure from the common mode of conducting these inquiries, and the method, which in the course of the following tract, he has ventured to adopt. He has distributed the whole of his inquiry under a few principal topics, which seemed to him to require illustration; and while these are more particularly noticed, they provide for the investigation of some subordinate particulars, which in taking a view of the subject, deserved regard. In this investigation, care also has been taken, that each part should depend on the support of the others as little as possible; and that each inquiry should be conducted with as much reliance on independent principles, and with as little regard to former deductions, as might with propriety be done. Hence will every conclusion, if found in the end to coincide with the rest, derive additional value, as it will not be liable
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to be affected by their weakness, or by any argument which may be employed against them.

Much depends on an investigation of the origin of the Irish. If we succeed in ascertaining this point, it will serve to reconcile many to a more attentive consideration of the remaining topics, which are at present so much affected by prejudice. We may then, with greater security, extend our inquiries to those particulars of importance, which distinguished them in their separate and sequestered situation.

Whether the ancient Irish were a civilized people, or immersed in barbarism, acquainted with literature, or ignorant, is a question which has been long debated, and which is, indeed, the only one in which posterity is particularly interested. The present controversy depends much on the issue of this inquiry, as it at once decides on the pretensions of the Irish to the long series of monarchs recited in their annals. If it be found that literature obtained among them, the strongest argument against the authenticity of these annals will be done away; and on the other hand, if they be evicted of any such pretensions, then will their history be degraded from the rank of national records, to that of un-instructive romance.

When the ground is thus far cleared, we may proceed to a review of the internal evidences which may be produced, relative to the authenticity of these ancient documents; and as these may be found more or less decisive, form our opinion. We may then also be qualified to appreciate the importance of a history which has been more investigated than perhaps any other of the same nature.

Such is the intent of this work. From a review of these particulars we may perhaps succeed

ceed in laying down a system more consistent with history, and with itself, than those which being formed with party views, and interested motives, have hitherto failed in their design. To enter into the various and subtile ramifications of argument, which have been occasioned by the duration of this controversy, has not been attempted; neither has much time been spent in refuting the numerous cavils which have been accumulated by successive writers. Should we succeed in laying down general and incontrovertible positions, we will, in effect, deprive these of any force; and to lay down such general positions, founded on properly substantiated facts, and strict reasoning, is the whole of our design.

CHAPTER II

SECTION I.

CONCERNING the origin of the Irish nation, various and contradictory opinions have been advanced. To enquire into the proofs which are adduced to strengthen these different hypotheses, or the objections to which they may be respectively liable, is not at present my intention. I shall only lay down that which appears to be most consonant with history, and the notices of early writers, and shall afterwards investigate the evidences by which it can be ascertained.

It

It is a point unanimously allowed, that Ireland is indebted for its population to different bodies of emigrants, whose settlements were accomplished at several successive periods. But there is no question more controverted than that which regards the particular tribes and nations from which these settlers are to be deduced. On a deliberate and cautious survey of this embarrassed subject, it will perhaps appear that the Irish are the descendants of a mixed nation of Celts from Britain and Gaul, of Scythians from Scandinavia and Germany, and of a colony from Spain, whose origin will require a minute discussion, as it has hitherto been more subject to doubt than almost any point in Irish history.

It is in the highest degree probable, that the migrations from most, if not from all these nations, were not confined to a single formation of a settlement or to a particular period. We find that Ireland long maintained a communication with Britain, Scandinavia, and Spain. And the same necessity which obliged one tribe of adventurers to abandon their original residence for a foreign settlement, would still continue to exist. Civil commotions, the devastation and ravages of war, the fear of the resentment, and jealousy of the power of a neighbouring community, the increase of population, the adventurous spirit characteristic of barbarism, would, at all times, be inducements for uncivilized nations to change their own for a distant clime. Hence different settlements in an island richly furnished with all that could invite a savage or a cultivated people to choose it for their residence.

Though the partisans of the national system of antiquities, concur in allowing that Ireland was colonized by different settlers, yet they
would

would be willing to believe, that these various emigrations were from the same original stock or family of mankind; nor can they reconcile themselves to the indignity of such a heterogeneous mixture. But whatever may be alledged by these against the imputation of such a disgrace, there is every reason to conclude that the Irish were by no means that pure and unmixed people which has been so frequently a subject for the boast of vanity, and the pomp of declamation. It is not in our power to trace the particular epochs at which these various migrations were accomplished, neither do we possess any materials by which we may be enabled to point out their number or the circumstances by which they were more particularly marked. It is sufficient for our purpose, that we prove the existence of these different colonies, and trace them to the nations to which they originally belonged.

Thus much may serve for the greater part of these colonies, in themselves, indifferent to the event of our principal design. But there is a particular migration from Spain, which has been the chief object of the attention of modern antiquarians, and which demands a greater share of notice. The connection which anciently subsisted between Ireland and Spain, is generally allowed, and in the sequel, it will perhaps be evinced, that to that peninsula in later ages, this island was indebted for new supplies in its population. But so very singular are the circumstances which distinguish the migration of which we now speak, as to require a minute and accurate investigation. To this it is, that all the controversies which have been agitated concerning the antiquities of Ireland relate; and it is this which has given rise to the
gorgeous

gorgeous fabric of their writers, and to all their pretensions to ancient splendour and superior refinement.

The people who thus changed their residence, are said by these writers, to have made various and indeed surprising peregrinations before their arrival in Spain. Their original residence they fix in Asia, where, as well as in other places, they introduce them to the acquaintance of divers personages, mentioned only in the sacred writings, and whom they speak of as connected with them. To secure to themselves an illustrious origin, supported by the firmest foundation, and aspiring to the most remote antiquity, they are careful to adopt the Mosaic philosophy, and to display the minute conformity observable between the scripture accounts of the descendants of Noah, and the geneological tables of their own nation. But the relation of these remote events, is not confined to these excursions of fancy: Various and improbable, as well as ridiculous and absurd, are the stories with which it is replete. Of these we shall speak in the sequel, and shall at present only remark, that nothing else could be expected in the narration of distant events, where the historian was nearly allied to the poet, and where so large a field lay open for sowing the seeds of fancy.

But though these accounts are thus blended with the intermixture of fabulous events and improbable circumstances, it does, notwithstanding appear, that such a people did actually migrate. Where they were originally seated can only be known, should we reject their own testimony, from the peculiarities which may be discovered in their usages, religion, and language, and from the likeness which may be traced between these and the same characteristics of another

another nation. In the following pages we shall endeavour to evince a similitude highly striking and observable between the Irish and the oriental nations in these respects. How it could be occasioned, will form the subject of a future inquiry; but it is necessary that we should first substantiate this extraordinary resemblance.

It may not perhaps be superfluous to observe, that in the mean time we should guard against the impulse of prejudice, which is so liable to mislead the mind in its researches, which would insinuate, that whatever is new is to be rejected, and which, shrinking from every appearance of critical disquisition, as from an unwarrantable concession, sets reasoning, and even demonstration at defiance. Caution, and an adherence to facts, should indeed be insisted on; but we should not shut out conviction, because, we may be inclined to doubt our capacity to explain any phenomenon. Against this mode of conducting our inquiries, it is presumed no exception can be made. It is that which the philosopher assumes, who is determined to guard against the allurements of system, and the effects of hypothesis; and it is that alone which can insure his safety.

But though the philosopher, the most cautious and sceptical, will not scruple to assume in his disquisitions, every fact which he finds properly ascertained, however it may militate against preconceived opinions, or to whatever novel conclusions it may lead, yet will we not require any protection for our historical system, if besides clearly evincing, we do not likewise account for the similitude of which we have spoken. Nothing is required more than that any doubts respecting the circumstances by which it was occasioned, if any should arise, be

be suspended to the place where they will be more properly considered, and that the attention be in the first place confined solely to an investigation of those evidences adduced to evince this national resemblance.

In order to strengthen our historical fabric, by removing from the foundation every imputation of doubt or uncertainty, I shall employ the remainder of this section in taking a short review of those proofs generally used in historical inquiries on subjects of this nature. Hence we may be enabled to judge how far this leading position is capable of being established, and what degree of confidence may be reposed in those conclusions to which such evidences may lead. Such an estimate will shew whether the present question is one of those which admit of historical proof, or whether our materials are too defective to admit of any decision; and we shall not be inclined to look for demonstration where certainty is not to be attained.

In our inquiry concerning the origin of this colony, we are precluded from any assistance, either from the information of national records, or the voice of tradition. The validity of conclusions rested on these evidences, is denied by all who do not subscribe to the whole of their system, as they consider the one as not authentic, the other unfounded.

Of the authenticity of this history, we are hereafter to inquire; nor shall we rest any evidence on the event of this investigation, as it is intended to support each disquisition on its own basis, without reference to collateral aid. Neither can we at present give any credit to the relation of tradition, concerning events so very remote, as entirely to lose every claim to the
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rank of historic evidence, especially when that tradition was handed down by successive generations of a people, who being immersed in barbarism, cannot be supposed, in case of being misled by their own ignorance, or the artifice of others, to have paid much attention to any circumstances which did not affect their present situation.

That the traditions of the Irish might have been strongly impressed on their minds by the songs of their bards, is acknowledged. But we are to remember, that the minds of the ignorant vulgar are alike susceptible of true and of erroneous impressions, when thus under the direction of men in whom they placed implicit confidence. That the bards would adopt every fiction which flattered the people, at the same time that it embellished their song, is much to be suspected; and they were supplied with a copious fund of materials for this purpose, in the intercourse of the Phœnicians with their island. To deduce the origin of their countrymen from these illustrious strangers, or at least to form such a relation as might evince an affinity with them, would have been a very agreeable, as well as a very easy task to this poetical fraternity. And a fiction thus composed, and frequently repeated, as it must have proved highly acceptable to the people in general, must also have been cherished by them, and impressed on their minds much more firmly, than if it were deserving respect on account of its fidelity in the narration of facts. Whether it was consistent with their real history, or fabulous, was an affair which could not much interest a people, when it at once flattered and amused; and fiction would have been heard with much more attention than truth, because the vulgar, fond of the marvellous, and

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credulous,

credulous, because ignorant, always prefer whatever is recommended by the intermixture of fancy, to the simplicity and austerity of truth.

We cannot, therefore, be warranted in admitting these dubious tales as evidence in favour of this Spanish extraction of the Irish; and we must therefore object to the propriety of considering them in any light, different from that, in which the traditions of the vulgar of every nation are viewed. The defenders of this exaggerated system may continue to declaim on the value of information of this sort; and they may also continue to *assert*, that the basis of their tradition is supplied by fact, not fiction. But with at least equal probability may those, who maintain a contrary hypothesis, contend for the truth of a position directly opposite.

Were this island possessed by a people who had made such a progress in the arts of refined life, as to have left behind them discriminative marks of their affinity, or difference, in these respects with other nations, we might then allow a further scope to our inquiries than is at present in our power. In Ireland, the antiquarian traveller meets with no remain more noble than the Round Tower; which, when compared with the grand and venerable reliques of Roman and Grecian magnificence, presents a contrast not very favourable to the superior refinement of the people by whom it was erected. Nor is the paucity of materials of this kind compensated by any minute or appropriate descriptions of their national customs and manners from the information of cotemporary writers, who could only discover, that the Irish were a barbarous, uncivilized, and ignorant people.

Thus defective in materials for pursuing this investigation, and for enabling us to discover
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the origin of this colony, we must not flatter ourselves with the illusion of producing evidence sufficient to enforce conviction, from any strained and doubtful resemblances between the people with whom they were incorporated, and the nations of the East, in the few and trifling resemblances which have been collected, with all the zeal and industry of the dealer in theory and hypothesis. We do not, in fact, possess any sufficiently authentic documents on which to support a fair and unexceptionable comparison. Nor even supposing we had an intimate acquaintance with their national manners and customs, should we be too forward to deduce from such suspicious evidences, any important conclusions. There are customs and usages which are universal, because produced in consequence of the same wants, and the same desires, universally impelling the human mind, and rousing it to a similar exertion of its faculties.* Were we, therefore, to inquire for the particular people from whom this colony may have been derived, from a supposition that we might be able to ascertain the discriminative peculiarities in manners and customs which would point out that origin, we might produce as many coincidences, as to "make it nearly impossible to say, "whether they originated in Europe, Asia, Africa, "or America."

But however inadmissible in dispassionate disquisition these indecise evidences, we may easily excuse their being brought forward by those antiquaries, who being impelled by the current of mistaken patriotism to realize an illustrious origin, cannot be supposed to be so unbiassed in their judgment, as they, who in their inquiries, propose truth alone for their ultimate object. Yet what excuse can be found for that writer, who, in or-

* See Note B.

der to evince the *pagan* extraction of the ancient Irish, instances the resemblance between the same nations, after their conversion to christianity, in respect to some frivolous contested ceremonies and tenets in their new religious system; as if they could have foreseen, centuries before their separation, the schisms occasioned by the time of the celebration of Easter, and the form of the ecclesiastical tonsure, and have, in consequence, resolved on the measures which they proposed their descendents should adopt! Such, nevertheless, is an argument adduced for the purpose of evincing this resemblance, and adduced by a writer who has much contributed to the revival of the present literary controversy, concerning Irish antiquities. On this method of argumentation we can but remark, that it is no less extraordinary, than the resemblance which he would thus persuade us to be hereditary. And we may also take the liberty to observe to the reader, not versed in the productions of some late writers, that from this specimen, he may form some idea of the arguments and the declamation, too frequently employed to swell the many tomes to which this subject has given rise.

Of the long catalogue of antiques collected and described by Colonel Vallancey, I am not ignorant. From a review of the probable uses of these, as far as could be collected from their names, or the descriptions of instruments of a similar kind in the works of early writers, and from the resemblance in both, which he has endeavoured to trace in those reliques which were used in the judicial and superstitious ceremonies of the Eastern nations, this learned author would infer that original identity, concerning which we are to inquire. But I am apprehensive, that these

these proofs are not sufficiently explicit for the purpose of historic evidence. It is indeed to be acknowledged, that in several instances, the resemblance appears by no means ideal; and that in some more particularly, it is clearly evinced. But evidence of this sort is, in a great measure, regulated by habit, and varies in its force according to the disposition of mind in which it is viewed. And what security can that history claim, which is not measured by the standard of sound judgment, but is compelled to appeal to the changeable verdict of private opinion; which rests its foundation on an instrument, which by one writer is supposed to be for the same purpose, and of the same *name* with the Jewish Urim and Thummim; by another, to be an officer's gorget? Besides, the identity of the Magian and Druidic religion, which, in the sequel will require to be noticed, will supersede any remarks on this subject. We have ample evidence, that in their usual solemnities, these religious systems bore to each other an exact resemblance; and so generally allowed, by the most weighty authorities, is this remarkable identity, that it will preclude any necessity of entering into a detail of such particulars as would be otherwise necessary to establish it. Whether the instances adduced by this writer could be employed to advantage in such a detail, is not therefore of much consequence: they may, however, be recommended to the investigation of those who would enter more at large into the subject.

In fine, the only circumstance that falls under this head, which requires examination, is, the origin and use of those singular edifices, the Round Towers, so peculiar to Ireland. I cannot, indeed, promise much illustration of the ques-
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tion of Irish origins from such an investigation; though, perhaps, something may be gleaned not wholly foreign to the purpose. The chief inducement to an inquiry respecting this subject, is the various and contradictory lights in which it has been exhibited: I have considered it in different points of view, and flatter myself, that I may have added some observations which escaped former writers.

But leaving the consideration of these uncertain evidences, which have been so frequently produced as proofs of affinity between particular nations, it will be proper to proceed to those remaining proofs, on which can be placed a more firm dependence. These are language and religion. And should we succeed in discovering those nations, between whom and the Irish a resemblance, in these respects, can be proved, we shall also succeed in discovering the origin of that colony by which the peculiarities, concerning which we inquire, were introduced.

The use of language in historical disquisition, has long been established; but it is much to be regretted, that it has been, in many instances, too far extended. The consequences of such an abuse are but too obvious, as it has involved in prejudice almost every investigation, in which etymological discussions are concerned. No study can be more *trifling* than that of catching at resemblances in sounds, and building and subverting new theories, by the magical intervention of a whimsical etymon; but when this study would intrude into serious investigation, it calls for the most severe reprehension.

This, however, is a manifest abuse of language. Where other evidences are deficient, its advantages will be found great indeed in tracing the connection of nations. We are not, from
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a few trifling and accidental coincidences, which will occur in dialects totally dissimilar, to infer any affinity. Unless we find the languages which we examine in a great measure the same, or bearing towards each other a resemblance too striking to be considered as accidental, we should be careful not to draw any such conclusion. When thus used, language may be considered as an evidence of the greatest authority; and in this light it is regarded by the best antiquarians. †

The evidence deducible from a similar resemblance in religion, is also to be considered as another important guide in these researches. On this subject the labours of many learned men have been bestowed; but the fruits of their industry are but too generally visible in the embarrassment which they have introduced in a matter which originally required but little illustration. I do not propose to examine how far their various hypotheses may be consistent with what I here offer; nor shall I venture to explore the labyrinth of Pagan mythology, in which the most profound learning, and the greatest abilities have been too frequently entangled. A more *superficial* examination will enable us to discover, and to pronounce, whether the religious ceremonies practised by different nations, bear to each other a minute resemblance; or whether they are to be traced to other sources. And this resemblance, or difference in religious opinions and rites, according to a great historian, will be a sufficient foundation for tracing the origin

† “Linguarum cognatio,” says Sheringham, “cognitionis gentium præcipuum certissimumque argumentum est.”—The testimony of Ihre is striking: he observes, that language “vestigia migrationis gentium quibuscumque fastis certius prodit.”

origin of nations, and discovering their connection.* The most inattentive observer will at once discover, that the religion of Greece had nothing in common with that revealed to the Jews; that the Chinese and the Magian superstition were derived from different sources; and that the Paganism of Rome was not that of Indostan. Yet we have seen serious attempts to resolve almost every set of opinions into a different, and to trace to a common source, the most dissimilar superstitions. And even at the present period, the genius and learning of Sir William Jones are employed in the pursuit of paradoxes, which would materially injure any literary character less firmly established.

In tracing the connection of nations, by means of a resemblance in religious rites and opinions, we should be cautious of depending on slight and incidental similarity. But when we find a near resemblance, an almost perfect identity in the mythology, and a general and striking uniformity in the superstitious ceremonies of different countries, we may conclude, that they are derived from the same source; and we are then to inquire, whether this common religion could have been extended in such a manner, in consequence of a particular train of events, or whether it is not retained by either nation from the earliest periods, and from times prior to their final separation. The variety of error is infinite; and it would be as uncommon to find two systems of paganism coincide in the principal, as well as the more minute peculiarities, in the singular and absurd notions of speculative religion, as well as in the long train of

* "Primum satis constat maximum amicitiae vinculum et cognitionis argumentum habitum fuisse similitudinem religionis, et eandem de diis opinionem." *Buchan.*

of whimsical and unmeaning ceremonies, as it would be to discover two languages radically different, and yet exactly the same.

Upon the evidence of these two historical authorities, religion and language, must be settled the origin of that colony, which introduced into Ireland those particularies in both, by which its antiquities are varied from those of the adjacent nations. If among the infinite diversification of error, and the infinite modification of language, we can point to two nations which bear to each other a resemblance in these respects, too striking and minute to have been accidental; if upon weighing those circumstances which would affect a migration from one country to the other, it appear that population may have flowed as well in this, as in another channel; if history confirm our conjecture of a former connection, or if by not recording any events by which it would be invalidated, it be tacitly allowed; these two nations must be granted to have been originally the same, and this conclusion will be regarded as *historic truth*. Upon these principles do we rest our investigation; and we only require, that the reader will decide on the stability of the superstructure, from that of the foundation on which it is raised.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER II.

SECTION II.

IN the preceding section was noticed the paucity of such remains of antiquity in Ireland, as might be sufficient to support a just and well-grounded comparison between them and those of a similar kind in other nations. The only instance to the contrary which was there remarked, was that singular edifice, the Round Tower, so frequently met with in this island, and so peculiar to it. To form any conjectures concerning its antiquity, to ascertain its use, and to deduce from these circumstances, the affinity of the people by whom it was erected, with other nations, I have deferred to the present opportunity.

Concerning these ancient structures, much has been written, and various are the conjectures to which they have given rise. The use for which they were designed, as well as the people by whom they were erected, are however points which have not met with any satisfactory solution. By some they are assigned to one purpose, by others, to another entirely different: there are who will have them to be built by the Danes; while not a few suppose them to have been the work of the native Irish themselves.*

In

* In the last excellent edition of the Britannia, (vol. iii. p. 481) the reader will see, at one view, the various conjectures and opinions of different writers on this subject: Though numerous, there are but few of them which would justify a particular investigation.

In this diversity of opinions, it would be tedious to animadvert singly on the conjectures of the different writers, by whom the subject has been treated. I shall, therefore, proceed no further, than to make some observations on the most popular suppositions; and to hazard a few remarks, which may tend more particularly to elucidate the Irish origins.

That these edifices were not Danish, is clearly to be inferred from the well-known fact, that they are not to be met with in any other of the various countries occupied or visited by that piratical people. Could we even suppose, that a body of such rovers, who, from their profession, must have been barbarians, and who were not favoured with any such intercourse with polished nations, as would tend to civilize them in their native seats, that such a people was superior to their more southern neighbours, who certainly were in more advantageously situated, yet how could we account for their design in erecting such singular edifices? And who is there who would entertain the idea, that in an enemy's country, where celerity and activity are indispensable requisites, they would make a full pause, and exhaust their vigour in the construction of buildings, for a purpose which would have been answered with as much effect from the top of a neighbouring eminence? Can any instance be produced from history, of a body of invaders pursuing a line of conduct so singularly preposterous? or can it be paralleled by any thing similar in the course of the inroads of the same people in the various countries which they infested?

But in order to exhibit this supposition in its proper light, it may not be improper to state a fact which the observation of every traveller will confirm. Were these structures
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built by the Danes for the purpose of beacons or watch towers, it is obvious that their situation would be the most elevated that could be discovered in the vicinity. Instead of this, there are but few, if any, remarkable for loftiness of site, and the greater part is indifferently to be met with on level and on rising grounds: And so little does this consideration seem to have influenced the builders of these structures, that some may be discovered on a plain, though an eminence or hill be adjacent. Even in the valley of Glandelough, surrounded as it is with mountains, one of these towers still subsists. We may therefore determine how far the conjecture, that these edifices were built by the Danes for the purpose of beacons, is supported by reason, by analogy, and by facts.

Those who would maintain this supposition, would find it difficult, were there no other objection in their way, to account for the circumstance of these towers being always in the vicinity of a church, or place for religious services: And they would find themselves no less perplexed with that tortured quotation from Cambrensis, in which it is recorded by a qualified observer, that these edifices, were for ecclesiastical purposes, and that they were peculiar to the kingdom*. These evidences are decisive; they limit the purpose for which these structures were erected, in such a manner as to give a much greater certainty to our conjectures.

Some writers have supposed, that these towers were designed for the retreat of anachorets, or for

* "Turres ecclesiasticas quæ more patrio arctæ sunt necnon et rotundæ." See Gerald. Cambrenf. Topog. Hibern. distinct. 2. c. 9.

for places of penance. Singular as is this opinion, it is nevertheless more generally received than any other; and no other consideration could induce me to treat it with seriousness, or indeed to give it any attention. It were superfluous to observe, that no other nation has done such honour to their penitents and recluses, though perhaps there was none which might have not done it with more convenience, than the Irish. Stone and lime edifices were almost unknown in this nation; they had not even their churches of such materials; and yet there are at present remaining more than fifty of these lofty and durable edifices designed for a far inferior use. These indeed are inconsistencies; but the mode of life which their anchorets affected, must have been not less so, when we consider the different treatment to which their brethren of the East exposed themselves on the summits of piles of a very different sort. And when we have learned to reconcile ourselves to this contrariety, we shall still have room for surprise, when we reflect on the singular and reprehensible neglect of our most diligent Hagiographers, who have not favoured us with any memorials of the distinguished personages, by whom these penitentiary edifices were occupied. Our surprise and our displeasure will increase when we consider that these venerable recluses must certainly have formed a conspicuous body in the national and ecclesiastical affairs, considerable from their numbers, and powerful from their influence. For that they were numerous, we may infer from the number of these towers, even at this day subsisting; and that their influence was powerful, the palaces which they inhabited, so superior

rior to any thing in the nation, both for durability and materials, sufficiently declare.

Indeed, if Ireland was formerly conspicuous for its refinement and politeness, if, as some modern writers would contend, it was the seat of the arts as it was of literature, we need not be surprised at finding such edifices as these dedicated to such trifling ends. This is the judgment of an author, whose reasoning on a similar subject we had occasion to notice. "Since," says he, "such a writer as Cambrensis speaks
" of these ancient monuments, and since they
" appear from their solidity at this day, to have
" been built with such art and firmness, as al-
" most to defy the ravages of time, and that
" they were *the retreats of wretched hermits, and*
" *pious recluses only*, what must not be the care
" of the people in erecting churches, colleges,
" and other public works of greater conse-
" quence? All our annals agree, that soon
" after clearing the country of woods, and lay-
" ing it out for tillage, the next care of our
" ancestors was to erect sumptuous edifices;
" and sure no one will doubt, but that they
" who built the city of Braganza, in Spain,
" and whose forefathers resided so long in
" Egypt, must have acquired some knowledge of
" architecture."—This dazzling prospect of national splendor, must doubtless afford great pleasure to every true Milesian; who, like the ideal possessor of every ship which entered the Athenian port, gathers from all parts, from the history of the most civilized, as well as from that of the rudest nations, whatever may contribute to adorn his fancied Ogygia, whatever may tend to his own intellectual enjoyment, and whom it were almost cruel to arouse
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from the contemplation of the splendid, the enchanting theme.

A more plausible conjecture on the design of these towers is, that they were intended for belfries. How far this conjecture is admissible, will, it is presumed, be clearly seen from a concurrence of probabilities and historic facts.

“ The Irish ecclesiastics who travelled,” says an ingenious writer, “ would wish to have the use of a bell in their churches and monasteries.” Their conduct in the attainment of this wish is indeed singular. “ Where should they hang the bells was *the question*. Their wooden structures would but ill answer this intention, and *perhaps*, they had not a tree near their convent. This first suggested to them the idea of getting steeples of stone and lime. And the very poverty of their other religious houses, dictated the circular form, because they could not be handsomely annexed to edifices of such perishable materials: And they stood isolate and detached, as if disdaining the other buildings to which they were not congenial.”

In attributing to the Irish clergy these wishes, and that emulation so natural to mankind,* it is singular

* Campbell's *Strictures*, &c. p. 228.—The passion of these Irish ecclesiastics of the eighth century, is not however without a parallel, and what is more surprising, it has been equalled by some *Englishmen* of the present age. The reader will not be displeased with seeing the likeness.

“ Adjoining to Berkely Castle, almost,” says a late traveller, in his tour through Gloucestershire, “ is the parish church, a respectable looking building. Unfortunately, the parishioners found a church was somewhat uncouth without a steeple. A steeple was therefore agitated in a vestry, and it was solemnly resolved it should be erected. How vain are all the determinations of mortals! The church could not bear the steeple: what

singular that this ingenious writer should not have inquired, how far it might have been practicable for this body, to imitate a custom, which they observed to be attended with advantage abroad. Nor is that inconsistency less remarkable, which would suppose the clergy UNIVERSALLY to adopt a refinement, which, in the same chapter, his own statement of facts, from the best authorities,† proves to have been utterly beyond their reach, *in any one instance*.

From this statement it appears, that the first church of lime and stone in Ireland, “a little oratory,” was not built before the twelfth century; that it was built by a personage no less distinguished than the Primate Malachy; and that it was considered as a “novelty” by the people, who severely upbraided that ecclesiastic for pride, and derided his folly for undertaking a work so much beyond his ability. “And as this was the first church,” (to use the words of the learned author) “so the palace built by Roderic “O’Connor, the last Irish monarch, at Tuam, “was the first dwelling-house erected by the “same people, and in the same manner, which “so astonished the beholders, that they called “it, *the wonderful castle*.”

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“what was to be done? Oh, who could bear to pray without
“a steeple! Well then, a steeple was determined to be built—
“but where do you think? Why—at the distance of about
“twenty yards from the edifice it was intended for.” See *Sullivan’s Tour*, vol. 1. p. 265.

Equally passionate for this desirable object, a steeple, according to our author, were these proprietors of “the little wooden abbies,” who set at nought every prudential consideration of national prejudice, of novelty, of exertions not very congenial to the sluggishness of their general character, and of expence beyond the resources of the first ecclesiastic in the kingdom. What pity it is that this coincidence in men of such different ages, and different dispositions, should have been unknown to the two learned gentlemen, who amused themselves in drawing a parallel between the London shopkeeper and the savage!

† S. Bernard in vit. Malach.

These circumstances being considered, it is rather surprizing that we should find the same nation in the common and general practice, of erecting *such* edifices for so trifling a purpose, as that of belfries; that this practice should have been continued for three centuries, and yet that this little oratory, *of the same materials*, should, *on that account*, be regarded as a novelty, and excite so violent a prejudice; and that so inconsiderable a building should be, by all men, regarded as equal to, if not beyond the resources of the most dignified ecclesiastic in the island, while the pride of every wooden abbey was its little bell suspended in one of these lofty and “wonderful” structures. These are striking contradictions; and there are many more which might be exhibited, were we to examine the subject more minutely. And either this statement of facts, which has been made by our author himself, from unexceptionable authorities, is unfounded, or those conclusions to be deduced from his conjectures on the erection of these edifices, must be given up as indefensible.

It is powerfully evident from the testimony of Cambrensis, and from the circumstance of these towers being always in the vicinity of some ecclesiastical edifice, that they were used for some purpose in religious ceremonies. And we may conclude, as well from what has been said relative to the improbability of their being built by the Irish clergy, as from their being unlike any thing in use among that body in any other country, that they originally had no reference to their convenience. Hence, then, we infer, that the Round Towers of Ireland were used in the celebration of the pagan worship; and of consequence, that they were erected before the fifth century. It will be admitted, that the pa-
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gan Irish *might have been* in the practice of solemnizing such rites, or performing such ceremonies as would require structures of this form; and these few obvious considerations, will, it is presumed, establish the high degree of probability that this was indeed the case.

When paganism was succeeded by the establishment of christianity, these towers must naturally have grown into disuse; and thus deserted, and every where obtruding themselves on the eye, they must have attracted notice, and been employed in subsequent ages for different purposes. We are, therefore, to distinguish between the *primary design*, and the *incidental or occasional use* of these towers. By the clergy they might have been employed as belfries; to the anachoret, they may have served as retreats from the cares and employments of life; to the penitent, as suitable places for the exercise of that mortification enjoined by his spiritual superior; and to those hosts of invaders, who for a series of years invaded and desolated the nation, they may, upon occasion, have afforded all the advantages of a watch-tower, or beacon. But to suppose that any one of these purposes was the primary object of the people by whom these structures were erected, is to suppose, what it would be exceedingly difficult, if not intirely impossible, to prove.

That these towers should be always found in the vicinity of a church, is a circumstance for which we may easily account. Though the Irish lost a number of erroneous opinions and unmeaning superstitions upon their conversion, yet we are not to imagine, that their minds were so fully enlightened, as to enable them to subdue different prejudices which they might consider as innocent, and in which they had
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always indulged. In consequence of these prejudices, the vulgar would still regard, with veneration, those spots which they had learned from their forefathers to respect; and even tho' reason might point out the impropriety of such a conduct, its voice would be too feeble when exerted against the force of established habit. A portion of this veneration they would gradually communicate to their teachers, or these from policy, might deem it expedient to join in the general error. Such an adherence to ancient superstition has been noticed in most revolutions of this kind; and habitual error has thus acquired a double sanction. We see no reason why this may not have been the case in Ireland;* and in the present affair, if our reasoning be well founded, we have an instance of its operation.† In nothing is tradition more defective, than in handing down national customs which have been disused, and ceremonies and opinions long since superseded. Such affairs interest not the vulgar; they are entirely beyond their sphere; and when the generation is passed away which introduced the alteration, very little which relates to it will be known to posterity. Finding these *spots* appropriated to religious uses, they would not trouble themselves with inquiries concerning the original purpose, or the æra of the erection of these towers; and should they even chance to receive some hints of their being employed in pagan worship, their indifference or their ignorance of the particular service for which they were designed, would not permit them to profit by the information. It is therefore probable, that the

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* The variety of heathenish superstitions retained by the Irish, not a few of which are yet to be discovered, has been frequently noticed by their own, as well as by foreign writers.

† See Note C.

nation at large, or even the clergy, were as ill-informed on these points as any writers of the present day ; and that their materials for discovering their original use, were as scanty as our own. All that they could with certainty inform us on that subject, is perhaps contained in the notice of Cambrensis. They found them spread over the country, unoccupied and without use, and they availed themselves of whatever advantages their form and situation would admit. Their loftiness and shape pointed them out as proper for the purpose of a steeple ; and at a time when steeples of such materials surpassed their means, they were pleased with the acquisition of so many already constructed, and proper for their use.

Such appears to have been the original design, and such to have been the revolutions which these singular edifices experienced. If any weight be allowed to these reasonings, we may hence conclude, that the people by whom they were constructed, and among whom their use was general, must have had a system of heathenism different in some material particulars from those which obtained in the western countries of Europe. In the same climate, and with every advantage of a similarity of situation, they have nothing of this kind * to produce among their remains of antiquity. If we extend our inquiry to those countries which are said to have been the primæval seats of the colony whose origin we would investigate, we will not meet with any greater success. But when removing to so remote a situation, and so different a country, they may have by degrees so far changed in this respect, as to erect
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* Except two in Scotland, apparently copied from those in this island.

durable edifices in the room of those of a temporary nature *for this purpose*, to which they had been accustomed. Particular circumstances with which we must ever remain unacquainted, may have operated this change, and the influence of their priests was sufficiently powerful to induce the people to make every exertion in a work of this kind in which they were so nearly concerned.

But after all, it must be confessed, that these speculations are purely conjectural, and that they will acquire credit for probabillity in some measure from the disposition of the reader. There may be some, perhaps, who will account them probable, but I am aware, that to others they will appear unsatisfactory. To such I would only observe, that they claim no higher rank than that of conjecture, founded on the imperfect view of Irish antiquities which relate to the present subject, and that they are professedly incapable of historic proof. This allowance, however, regards nothing further than the conjectures relative to the *origin* of the Irish, from the peculiarity in the form and structure of their round towers. As far as relates to the *use* of these edifices, I presume to think that I have established this point, with as much certainty as the subject will permit.

The notion that the Irish round towers may have been similar, as well in structure, as in their original use, to edifices among the oriental nations, has however been extended farther than I would venture to introduce it in this place, and extended by writers, whose prejudices militate in direct opposition to that system of antiquities, which such a resemblance would tend to support. How far their conduct on this occasion may countenance the conjectures

tures which I have advanced, rests not with me to determine.

In the eleventh number of "Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis," is published a tract, entitled, the "Topography of Ireland," in which the *authors* * make the following remarks at the word Cloghad, a Round Tower.

"As these round towers, are neither found in
 " Britain, nor the European continent, they
 " were probably introduced into this island by
 " the Persian Magi, or Gaur, who in the time
 " of Constantine the Great, *ran over the world*,
 " carrying in their hands, censers, holding the
 " holy fire, asserting, their God should destroy
 " all other Gods, which in some measure they
 " effected, by lighting fires under them, thereby
 " burning those of wood, and melting those of
 " metal. In this period, the Christian religion
 " made some progress in the southern and east-
 " ern parts of Europe; but in Ireland, Druidic
 " superstition remaining in its original purity,
 " *whose tenets not being widely different from those of*
 " *the Gaur*, these pagan philosophers found a
 " ready assent to their doctrines. Whence *pyra-*
 " *theias*, or Vestal Towers, became universal
 " in Ireland, in the place of the ancient
 " Tlachgo."

The singular nature of the information with which we are favoured in this extract, must naturally attract our notice, and induce some inquiry concerning the sources to which we are indebted for such valuable knowledge. These motives appear to have influenced the learned Colonel Vallancey, who has accordingly investigated the subject, and has fully displayed the reason why this discovery of the origin of the

* By Colonel Vallancey, they are styled a "Triumvirate."

the round towers was never before made. He has followed these writers through the extent of their assertions, and has clearly traced those passages of different authors, which they selected only to pervert them. Of this sort of literary perversion, we have but too many instances in the course of this controversy, and such has been the force of prejudice, that it has compelled men, otherwise entitled to respect, to depreciate themselves in such a public manner. Inquiries of this nature are generally, and with justice, termed liberal; but it is painful to observe the frequent departure of different writers, from every principle of candour, which might be expected to govern them, while engaged in such disquisitions. To attempt a palliation of such conduct, is but to encourage it. And it is incumbent on every writer on the subject, to expose it wherever it may be found; and to endeavour, by every means, to explode the adoption of measures so illiberal, and it may be added, so highly disgraceful.

It appears evident, that these writers must have been forcibly struck with some remarkable resemblance between the towers of the Irish, and others of the same kind, among the professors of the Magian system of religious opinions. For it will be difficult, on any other supposition, to account for the precaution which they used on this occasion, of anticipating any reasoning more unfavourable to their general ideas of Irish antiquities. That minds thus prejudiced, should be unable to resist this correction, is indeed remarkable, and indicates, that there may be more foundation for our conjecture, than might have been otherwise supposed. Conjectures however, of this sort, though they may have some weight, and may assist the mind in forming

forming general notions, will not be of sufficient validity to serve as the basis of a firm historical structure. We must therefore quit this subject, in order to proceed to the consideration of evidences more certain and conclusive.

C H A P T E R III.

S E C T I O N III.

OF the numerous systems of heathenism which have obtained among the various communities of mankind, there is perhaps, none which would afford more curious views of human nature, than that of the ancient Druids. But, whether from the deficiency of original information, or from the remoteness of the æra at which it was prevalent, it is to be regretted that our acquaintance with this system should be so defective. This, however, affects only the philosopher who requires in his investigations a minute and exact knowledge of the various peculiarities by which it was distinguished, and of the effects which such a set of opinions would produce. The principal outlines will suffice for the antiquary; and these have been preserved by different writers, whose information is derived from the best sources, as well as by the remains of the superstitious ceremonies which have been collected from tradition and national customs.

The subject of our inquiry is the exact resemblance, or rather the identity of the Druidic
and

and Magian superstition, and the cause which has produced a similarity so extraordinary. That these two systems were thus closely allied, has been long allowed, by ancient*, as well as by modern writers. A late learned antiquary observes, that “the god *Baal*, *Bell*, or *Belenus*; “the transmigration of souls, their cosmogony “and theogony, were *wholly* Phœnician. What “their own mythology was, we know not†.” But the writer, whose inquiries seem to have been most extensive on this subject, and whose reflections are remarkable, is Doctor Borlase, in his learned history of Cornwall. In that work he states this resemblance in a forcible manner, and shews how much embarrassment attended him in his attempt to discover the circumstances by which it was occasioned.

“Whence this striking conformity,” (says he) “in temples, priests, worship, doctrine, and divination between two such distant nations, “(as were the Britons and Persians) did proceed, is difficult to say. There never appears “to have been the least migration, any accidental or meditated intercourse between them “after the one people was settled in Persia, and “the other in Gaul and Britain.” Our author then notices the opinion of Pelluntier, that these nations were originally derived from the same stock. This opinion is however erroneous, nor can it be allowed that the Celts and Persians ever were one since the grand separation of nations. And even were this the case, “this “union,” as the Doctor observes, “must have
“be

* Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. 16 c. 44 & l. 30, c. 1.

† Pinkerton's Dissert. p. 68. See also his Scotland, vol. 1. p. 405 “Its Deities and Mythology, are clearly Phœnician, — transcripts of Phœnician Mythology.”

“ been so early, that it can only account for
 “ an agreement in the essentials of religion,
 “ which in the first ages were few, simple, and
 “ unadorned, and spread into all parts, and
 “ these continued in great measure at first.
 “ The great question then is, whether the Per-
 “ sians and Celts could be one nation, late
 “ enough in time to have had such a variety of
 “ customs, rites and doctrines, of the same cast
 “ and turn among them, when one people, so
 “ as that when they separated and settled, some in
 “ Persia, and others in Europe, they carried their
 “ rites, customs, and doctrines with them into
 “ their several departments, whence a constant
 “ and visible conformity ensued.”

“ This,” he remarks, “ is a difficulty not ea-
 “ sily solved.” For it is certain from history,
 that no such separation *as he would intimate*,
 was made so lately as to occasion this resem-
 blance. “ The great correspondence between the
 “ Druids and the Magi, as to their power, skill
 “ in magic, &c. all these were much too mo-
 “ dern,” and we must deduce this conformity
 from another channel.

After making some remarks on the trite fable
 respecting the knowledge and the journeys of
 the celebrated Abaris, we are presented with
 such a solution, as in the opinion of the Doctor,
 will account for the resemblance. “ The Phœ-
 “ nicians were very conversant with the Per-
 “ sians, for the sake of eastern trade, *and no-*
 “ *thing is more likely*, than that the Phœnicians,
 “ and after them the Greeks, finding the Druids
 “ devoted beyond all others to superstition,
 “ should make their court to that powerful or-
 “ der, by bringing them continual notices of
 “ oriental superstition, in order to promote and
 “ engross

“ engross the lucrative traffic which they carried
 “ on in Britain for so many ages. And the
 “ same channel which imported the Persians,
 “ might also introduce some Jewish and Egyp-
 “ tian rites. The Egyptians traded with Egypt,
 “ and had Judea at their own doors, and from
 “ the Phœnicians the Druids might learn some
 “ few Egyptian and Jewish rites, and interweave
 “ them with their own*.”

Between the predicament in which our author is involved, and that of the learned writers of the “ Topography of Ireland,” is such a similarity as merits attention. If he could not avoid being struck with the exact conformity between the religious tenets and ceremonies of nations, so widely separated; they were unable, though swayed by party and prejudice, to elude a conviction of their similarity in that point, which more immediately came under their notice. He wilfully shut his eyes against those traditions of a neighbouring people, which might have enabled him to solve such a difficulty: they no less incredulous, professedly attempted to involve them in contempt and discredit. He neglected the proper means of disentangling himself from his embarrassment: they refused the assistance which, they knew, had been effectual for the same purpose. He, lost in perplexity, adopted an expedient which served only to expose him to ridicule: they, involved in error, and refusing to be extricated, were reduced to the unjustifiable necessity of cutting that knot which they would not untie. He employed the innocent artifice of introducing among the sequestered inhabitants of the British isles, the tenets and superstition of the distant Persians, by means of rough, untaught Phœnician sailors, who made religion an article of trade, and who bartered
 for

* See Note D.

for the tin of the ignorant islanders, Persian and Egyptian priests, instead of salt, crockery, and brazen ware: while they, converting the persecuted Christians of the East into Chaldean Magi, sent them, instead of to Constantinople or to Egypt, across the continent of Europe, to propagate the doctrines of their countrymen among the barbarous possessors of Ireland.

The latter position, as it was principally founded on misrepresentation, required some inquiry in order to its detection; but that a notion so extravagant as that of Borlase, should be seriously adopted by numerous antiquarians, and among the rest, by the learned author of the "Inquiry into the history of Scotland," is truly surprising. However, as it has such respectable authorities to plead in its defence, I shall not let it pass without some investigation.

In consequence of this opinion of the origin of Druidism, the ingenious writer above referred to, affects to think, that it was never generally received in Britain and Gaul; that it was but imperfectly established in these nations; and that even those tribes by whom it was thus adopted, bore but a small proportion to the rest of their countrymen. But, perhaps it will appear that Druidism prevailed much longer, and that its influence was more extensive than would be supposed from this representation to have been the case.

"Druidism," says he, "as we know from *Cæsar*, was a *late* invention in the south of Britain, and it was *totally* abolished by Tiberius*." Now, in the first place, *Cæsar* does no where say that Druidism was so lately instituted; for on the contrary, he places it among those

* Inquiry, vol. i. p. 17.

those events which are recorded by uncertain tradition. "It is thought," says the great writer, "that Druidism was invented in Britain, and that it extended thence to Gaul;" and as a confirmation of this opinion, he adds, that "at this time those who are desirous of a more intimate acquaintance with its mysteries, generally repair to that island for instruction*." Cæsar, it may be observed, speaks of this event as traditional; for were it so recent as is supposed, there would be no room for an expression implying uncertainty or probable conjecture. Consequently, an event which was only to be known from tradition, and that tradition so uncertain as to require the support of reasoning from concomitant circumstances, must have been somewhat remote, and cannot be said to have "lately" taken place.—And indeed, if Druidism had been thus introduced, the æra of its institution must have been, even in Cæsar's time, remote, because, the commerce of the Phœnicians had long been suspended.

It is also asserted, that "Pliny tells us, that Tiberius abolished the Druidic religion, which he could not have done, had it spread so wide as we dream†." And in another passage, on the authority of Suetonius and Aurelius Victor, the epoch of its extirpation is extended to the reign of Claudius. "by whom it was totally extinguished." Now, every one of these writers expressly limits the abolition of the inhuman rites of this body to Gaul, and there is no authority to shew that it extended

* De bell. Gallico, lib. VI. c. 13.—Disciplina in Britannia reperta atque inde in Galliam translata *existimatur*; et nunc qui diligentius, &c.

† Inquiry, vol. 1. p. 406.

tended to Britain. Pliny, who ascribes it to Tiberius, in the sentence immediately following, observes, that "*Britannia hodie eam attonite celebrat tantis ceremoniis ut dedisse Persis videri possit**." And the most ill-informed reader will at once recollect that the jurisdiction of Tiberius, did not extend farther than the continent. In another place Pliny speaks of the Druids as flourishing even in his time in Gaul, and describes some of the ceremonies which they continued to practise†. The great dislike with which the Druids were regarded by the Romans, was occasioned by the horrid and inhuman rites which they practised; "*namque,*" says Tacitus, "*cruore captivo adolere aras et hominum fibris consulere deos fas habebant.*" This body might have incurred the resentment of their conquerors, by their attempts to shake off their bondage; but doubtless, their detestation of these barbarities, was a principal motive for issuing the imperial edicts, which directed their suppression. These edicts, if we may judge from the expressions of the different writers by whom they are mentioned, were chiefly directed against the abuses which obtained among the conquered nations, and which were incompatible with a well established government. But it appears from what has been said, that after the suppression of these enormities, Druidism was still cultivated, and that it continued to be the religion of the rude nations, among whom it had formerly flourished. By insensible degrees, it is probable, it vanished in proportion as these nations were civilized, and it may be conjectured, that the diffusion of Christianity, was

* See Note E.

† Hist. Nat. l. 16. c. 44.

was in no small degree a cause of its disappearance.

We are also assured with the same dogmatism of expression, that Druidism was not diffused among any tribes of Scythian extraction, either in Britain or Gaul, and that “there is no authority at all for Druids being known beyond present North Wales, on the north, and the river Garonne, the bounds of the Celtæ, in Gaul, on the south. A line drawn by the Severn, in Britain, and Seine in Gaul, forms the eastern bound, while the ocean forms the western*.” Whether or not this peremptory remarker will allow the testimony of Cæsar to be an authority†, is not for me to say, though the intelligence we derive from him, is sufficiently decisive. That great commander informs us, that “*in omni Gallia*,” in all Gaul, there were two bodies of men of superior distinction, the Knights and the Druids. What he means by the term, “*omnis Gallia*,” he fully shews, when he afterwards tells us, that the annual assembly of the Druids was held in the territories of the Carnuti, “which district was supposed to be the centre of all Gaul§.” The Carnuti, it is agreed, were the people of Chartres, a district in the vicinity of the Seine, and near the city of Paris, and cannot by any means be supposed to be the centre of Celtic Gaul. But this country completely answers the description of being “in the middle of all Gaul,” Aquitain, and the Narbonnese province excepted. Hence then it is demonstrated, that Druidism was not confined to such narrow limits as those prescribed to it in Gaul; and as the same argument is used by our author, to shew that it was not prevalent among

* Inquiry, Vol. i. p. 406.

† See Note F.

§ Quæ regio totius Galliæ media habetur.

among the Belgæ of Britain, the same may be observed of his conclusion respecting its limits in that island*.

Having made these observations on the general state of Druidism, let us inquire what degree of probability attends the supposition that this institution was introduced into Britain by means of the Crews of Phœnician ships which traded here, at a time before these countries were *discovered* by the Romans. And a few considerations will enable us fully to decide on this subject.

It may be remarked in the first place, that the supposition which is here made, and which is intended to pass for history, is the only piece of history which exists of the kind. We have never heard of any similar event, and our experience of mankind would convince us, that such a circumstance is utterly improbable. That a national change should be made by a barbarous people, in the whole of their mythology, through caprice or the influence of a neighbouring state, would be accounted remarkable, though such changes have at times occurred. But we have never heard that the same change was introduced through the means of untaught and ignorant mariners, who made transient visits to a remote and uncivilized coast: and reason would convince us that such a revolution could never be effected by such singular means.

It may be further observed, that the Phœnicians could not have had any motive sufficiently powerful, to induce them thus to cultivate the good offices of the Britons. In the simple intercourse which obtained, they had no rival,

* The same remark will materially affect not a few of the dogmatic assertions of this writer every where spread through his learned work.

rival, nor any thing to fear from the insinuations of an interested neighbour. Nor is it to be supposed, that these barbarous and unrefined islanders, would require to be initiated into the mysteries of a religion, of which they could not possibly know any thing, unless from the incomplete hints of men, whose occupation in life rendered them the least qualified among their countrymen, to satisfy the curiosity which they excited. And that the Druids would adopt the whole of the tenets and ceremonies of these strangers, from a principle of ambition, is not to be supposed, unless we attribute to them a portion of those sentiments which have *unshackled* the minds of our modern *philosophers*.

The only supposition upon which we can allow that the Britons copied immediately from the Phœnicians in these respects, is that of a colony settled in the island for the purpose of conducting traffic. This supposition has been actually made: And indeed, if it be allowed to be founded on truth, we might at once infer, that the Druids imitated and copied the doctrine and superstition of these polished emigrants. But that there never was such a colony, is easily evinced, from the trifling intercourse of the Phœnicians in any other respect than that of simple exchange of commodities, from the total deficiency of any monuments indicative of their residence, from the silence of tradition, and much more from that of history. And if no such colony existed, it is not to be supposed that the merchants of Tyre would interest themselves so deeply in the affairs of the Celtic priests, with whom their connection was so slight; nor can we imagine, that for the gratification of that body, they would betray the
E
arcana

arcana of their religion, and the mysteries of the Magi.

It is not at all probable that the Magi would consent to this publication of those secrets which they exclusively studied. But granting that they were thus communicative, allowing too, that the Phœnicians would take the trouble of giving the Britons some information on the subject, and that these, from the hints thus received, would willingly introduce them among their ancient rites, yet, how are we to account for the extent of the Druidic mysteries, which required in some cases a noviciate of twenty years, and which could not be attained in any without the most tedious and long continued attention? Such a quantity of verses as they were employed during that time in committing to memory, could not, it is presumed, have proceeded from a combination of barbarous islanders, and as their mythology was the same with the Phœnician, we must infer that these mysteries were also the same with those of the priests of that polite people. This inference is, besides, decisively confirmed from the general accounts which we receive of the subjects of their speculations. Now it is entirely impossible that the Druids could have been instructed in these arcana by mere traders, and it is utterly improbable that any of that body by whom they were studied in the East, should have transported themselves to these sequestered isles, and that they should have remained among a barbarous people for such a time as would be requisite for their initiation, and for giving them a due knowledge of these voluminous mysteries. Nor is it less improbable, that the rude islanders would submit to such constraint, under the tuition of strangers, with whose language

guage they were unacquainted, and whose habits, and general turn of thinking, were so different from their own.

The learned writer, however, though he has here adopted a supposition, which though unfounded, and perhaps extravagant, is common to him with others, does not appear willing to tread implicitly in their footsteps. He has accordingly made a singular deviation, and to the utter confusion of every northern antiquary who has written on the subject, has pronounced, that "in Ireland there is not the shadow of an authority for the very name of Druid being known, and antiquaries might, with equal reason, give us Bonzes and Dervises in Ireland*." A writer who thus dogmatically contradicts all his predecessors, and who does not scruple to brand them on this account with the name of "Visionaries," though he be not prepared for a retort equally courteous, should not however be surprised, if he finds authorities and facts adduced to confute his magisterial and summary decision. If he consult Sir James Ware's† Inquiries on this subject, he will find that that writer, who would not without foundation, assert any thing of this kind in which almost every reader would be a judge, has directly affirmed the contrary. Even Dr. Campbell will prove, that the modern Irish retain that *word*, the knowledge of which is so peremptorily denied to their ancestors.§ But this were a slender evidence, were it unsupported by tradition or history. That the traditions of the Irish are uniform in maintaining this point, it is unnecessary for me particularly

E 2

* Vol. 1. p. 405, and 18.

† Warzi disquis. c. 5. sect. 1.

§ Philosoph. survey, p. 227, 8vo.

larly to state. And it were equally superfluous to repeat the detail of the numerous vestiges of the heathenism of the Irish, which are still retained, and which are most clearly and unequivocally Oriental or Druidic*.

Celtic traditions must not, however, in arguing with this writer, be mentioned in a serious light. "They are super-superlative, and extra-superlative nonsense†." Whence then are we to derive any knowledge of the religion of the pagan Irish? If their history, and the remains of that religion which still subsist among their descendants, are not sufficient evidences, we must enquire from foreign writers, and to them we must look for every certain information. But it is well known that the Romans had few motives for giving minute and appropriate descriptions of our national manners and rites. And if not one of their writers can be found to prove that Druidism did not extend to this island, what apology can this abusive writer plead for loading with scurrility and opprobrium, every other antiquary without exception, who has noticed the subject? This is in fact the case; and his illiberal conduct must only reflect disgrace on his own character. On the other hand, Tacitus, whose means of information were unexceptionable, has recorded, that "in climate and soil, in the dispositions and *customs*‡ of its inhabitants, Ireland differed very little from Britain." This evidence our author

* To the same place I refer for different proofs of the remaining vestiges of Druidism. See also Buchanan, lib. 2. p. 60. Speaking of the Druids, he says, "*plurima ex veteribus institutis adhuc manent, nec quicquam fere in Hibernia nisi in ceremoniis et religionis ritibus est mutatum.*"—A croud of similar authorities might be produced.

† Vol. 2. p. 16.

‡ Cultus.

author may deem indecise; but in the course of his antiquarian researches, he frequently contents himself with resting points of the first importance on a much slighter foundation; and what is more to the purpose, this account of Tacitus is much more applicable, and more determinate than any other which he can produce of an opposite tendency.

Such was the extent to which Druidism had prevailed. We are now to inquire more particularly concerning its origin, and the quarter from which it first spread through the neighbouring states. It has, I presume, been evinced, that this institution could not have been introduced by means of a few ignorant mariners, in the course of their transient visits to these remote shores. And it remains to be observed, that we cannot devise any probable supposition to account for this introduction, except that of the migration of a people, such as has been already stated. If this migration be allowed, we need not long hesitate concerning the country in which the settlement was accomplished. While the traditions of Gaul and of Britain are entirely silent on the subject, those of Ireland have long maintained the reality of this event. Their voice is confirmed by the concurrence of historic evidence. Cæsar has recorded, that those of the Gauls, who wished to acquire an intimate acquaintance with the Druidic mysteries, repaired to Britain. We are hence directed to trace the fountain of this remarkable institution, in a retrograde direction: and this concurrence of probability, clearly points out Ireland as the prime seat of Druidism, as the fountain whence all knowledge of its tenets and ceremonies was originally derived to the western world*.

E 3

From

* See Note G.

From the few and simple considerations which form the basis of the present disquisition, we may be surpris'd when we find it so embarrassed as to require such tedious details. Without having recourse to the chemical process of a Rudbeck, a Pezron, or a Cumberland, we may be justified in recognizing an indenture, which cannot fail to strike every observer who may take a survey of the religion in question, and we may be permitted to join with the general opinion of writers of every description, in ascribing to them an origin common to both. Here, however, the agreement ceases. To fix on a supposition which would account for this remarkable circumstance, has been found to perplex and to divide the opinions of those antiquaries, who have attempted a solution of the difficulty. I cannot subscribe to the opinion of those which would make the Celts and the Persians the same people, because it is an opinion which history evidently proves to be erroneous. And I cannot discover, that this supposition, if even it were true, would tend to an elucidation of the point, because the separation of these distant nations must have been too remote to have produced the conformity which has been observed. The hypothesis that the religious tenets of the Magi were introduced in these sequestered nations, through the communication of ignorant traders, I consider as extravagant, and still more, as indefensible on the principles of experience, and even of common sense. Nor can I regard the mention of this hypothesis in any other light than that of a cover for the prejudices of our own, and the perplexity of foreign antiquarians. There remains but one supposition, by which to account for this identity, and that one is amply sufficient to remove every

every doubt, and to reflect a steady light on the subject. That supposition I have already stated. And whoever will not oppose the general opinion of antiquarians, with regard to the common origin of the Magian and Druidic religions, and at the same time will not assent to the dogmatic and unfounded *asseverations* of a Pinkenton; *such an one virtually declares his belief, that a settlement of a people who were conformable to the nations of the East in these respects, must at some remote æra, have been formed in Ireland.* And if, as has been with justice observed, “ the highest
 “ probability attainable in historic research, or,
 “ as it may be called, *Historic Truth*, consists in this,
 “ that though you cannot demonstrate it to be
 “ true, yet you can prove all opposite opinions
 “ to be false,” it will be allowed, that the migration into Ireland, to which all their history; and their traditions more particularly point, must be considered as *historically true*.

CHAPTER

C H A P T E R II.

S E C T I O N IV.

IT seems to be an opinion generally entertained, that the Irish language is the most pure and unmixed dialect of the Celtic that now exists. This opinion being plausible, and having been seldom controverted, has derived a further accession of proof in being adopted by writers whose erudition and knowledge claim considerable respect.

To oppose, in this point, the repeated assertions of those antiquarians, who, to greater abilities and penetration than I can claim, have joined an intimate acquaintance with the language in question, requires for my justification, a full and undoubted conviction of their error. That it is an error, will, I presume, appear from a very slight consideration; and perhaps it is to a want of this that we are to ascribe its long continuance, and its being cherished and entertained without any suspicion. Like other mistakes of a similar nature, the present one has been retained merely on the footing of authority, and owes its prevalence to the inadvertence of successive writers, who have undeviatingly followed those by whom it was first introduced. Thus Sir William Temple's conjecture, has been often repeated, and has been forced to adapt itself to the reasonings of those antiquarians who repose implicit confidence in assertions which they
might

might easily verify from themselves. Thus likewise, have they reposed on the notions of Leibnitz, and of Llyyd. But it should be observed, that these notions are to be traced either to a general error, in confounding together the Celts and Scythians, though radically different, or to an ignorance of Irish history, and a consequent fallacious reasoning.

To so great an extent has the former error operated, that Ihre supposes the Celtic language to be a dialect of the Gothic; an opinion in which he is by no means singular. This radical mistake also pervades the whole of the heterogenous "essay on the Celtic language," and has betrayed the writer of that tract, into most strange and ludicrous conclusions. That learned author may well indeed attempt to extend the prevalence of the Celtic in nations, the most remote from each other, and mutually unconnected, when he can produce such respectable assistance, as would be furnished by an alliance with the Goths. But when he takes for granted, positions, which it will be impossible for him to reconcile with history, he cannot but expect that every subsequent deduction must be rejected as erroneous.

The great Leibnitz, has also failed in this point. He argues, as though Britain could be peopled only from the continent immediately adjacent, Ireland from Britain, and an island, should such an one be supposed still further west, from Ireland. This is in effect the amount of his reasoning. For unless we resolve his arguments into such a supposition, we cannot account for any conjecture, that the Celts, being pressed by the approach of new colonies of a different origin, should have retired by degrees, and that they should have *exclusively* possessed

ferred this island. The fact is, that Ireland, open as it was to the inroads of these new Scythian colonies in their naval expeditions, did actually receive large supplies in its population, not only from countries lying in the same parallel, but also from the northern regions of Europe. These settlers, though at first they did not mix with the original Celts, were, however, in a series of time, incorporated in the same general mass. And so far erroneous are such observations as these, that we must look for a more pure dialect of the Celtic in Britain, than in this island. Here the two distinct races were intermingled: in that country they were in a great measure separate, and have continued to preserve themselves with but an inferior degree of intermixture.

The Welch has certainly received a large increase of words from the Gothic, as is evinced from the researches, and even from the errors of different glossologists. In a much greater degree, therefore, are we to suppose this corruption to have taken place in Ireland. Without a very accurate acquaintance with both of the parent sources, no writer can trace any word in it to either. And hence have arisen the mistakes of the etymologists, who contend, that it was originally the same with the Latin, the Greek, and other dialects of the Gothic, while at the same time they strenuously maintain, that it is a good specimen of the Celtic. Nor less remarkable is the mistake of Bullet, who making the Irish, with the Highland Scottish, a standard of the Celtic, assures us, that he has sought in them for every term of his Dictionary, and that of consequence, it is beyond doubt, they are all the genuine remains of that language.

These

These errors clearly evince, that the Irish language, has a strong admixture of the Gothic, and we are hence to make the necessary inference, that the population of this nation, is to be traced to both of these grand divisions of mankind. And we may observe, that the proportion of the Gothic stock, is not, perhaps, so inconsiderable as has been commonly supposed. Had this been the case, its traces in this language would be but inconsiderable, while they are on the contrary very conspicuous. That there were indeed different colonies of this extraction, and these of no little consequence, will be seen from the relations of the Irish writers themselves.

If the traditions of the Irish be true, and if the reality of a migration into this island, of a people who introduced Oriental manners and religion, be allowed, it will be expected that we should find in the Irish tongue, vestiges of eastern language. And here, though it must be confessed, that great caution is requisite in adopting any conclusions of this nature, yet it must also be allowed, that there is a strong admixture of the Assyrian*, discoverable in the Irish, and that many of the terms in this tongue, are to be traced to roots in the former. This is a discovery, owing to that spirit of inquiry, which distinguishes the learned essayist, on "the antiquity of the Irish language." In that tract, Colonel Vallancey has with the greatest clearness, and upon principles the most unexceptionable, evinced a striking resemblance. Writers, whose impartiality will not be suspected, and whose judgment must be regarded as decisive, have expressed their conviction

* The Assyrian I take, to be that language of which the Arabic, Punic, Hebrew, Syriac, &c. are dialects.

viction of the leading positions which are there investigated and maintained. Nor would any doubt be entertained on the subject, had not these positions been in direct opposition to the historical system of some late antiquarians, who though they have not been willing to hazard a formal investigation of the subject, do notwithstanding think proper to treat it with neglect, and to suppose it unworthy of notice*.

With regret it must be confessed, that the subsequent romantic attempts in etymology of this learned writer, have furnished the disputant with a specious pretext for sneering at the whole of his labours on antiquarian subjects. Flushed with the success of his inquiries, he has proceeded to make trials of skill, which serve only to expose his former labours to disregard, and to construct systems, of which it may be doubted, whether they are to be clearly comprehended, even by the writer with whom they originate. I do not desire to be at all considered as an apologist for these effusions of learned extravagance; but I must observe, that none but a sophistical disputant will take advantage of these generally acknowledged errors, with the design of involving in the same discredit, inquiries which have been conducted in a more unexceptionable manner. It is a duty which is owed to candour and justice, to appreciate every attempt of this kind solely from its own merits, and it were very unfair to confound, in undistinguished censure, disquisitions, founded on

* I must here take the liberty of adducing in my own defence, the inconsistency of a late very ingenious and acute writer, who on the present subject, more particularly, stands convicted of the most palpable self-contradiction. I need scarcely say that I allude to Dr. Campbell.

on principles of acknowledged validity, and incoherent essays, of which the subjects are as extravagant, as the mode of conducting the inquiry is exceptionable. That the Irish language has a striking admixture of the Punic, we must look upon as proved on the most stable foundation; and in this light it has been regarded by foreign writers of distinguished learning and knowledge. But we are not to allow equal credit to the assertion, that the greater part, if not the entire of the former tongue, is to be traced to roots in the other. Assertions of this sort are to be maintained only by that process which Buchanan declares to be effectual for transmuting any one thing, into any other whatever. Such a process has been too frequently adopted; and it is perhaps this which may have assisted the learned antiquary in changing the *Iberno-Celtic* into the Japanese. Very different means were used in his more early investigations: nor less different should be our judgment of the effects. Still however, that the Chinese has an equal degree of affinity to the Irish with that of the Phœnician tongue, is an assertion* which will appear to be founded on an exaggerated estimate on the one hand, while on the other, the resemblance is supposed to be more minute than in reality it is.

On the late incoherent attempts of this voluminous glossologist, to form historic systems, founded on etymology, the critic, should he deem them worthy of notice, must pass a most severe reprehension. But with confidence we may call even on the abettors of a contrary hypothesis

* See Pinkerton, vol. 2. p. 30. The remark made at the end of the second note in that page, must be applied to the present subject. Such collations as have lately made their appearance, should be considered as trials of skill in this way.

hypothesis with regard to Irish antiquities, to deny that there is a number of Punic terms discoverable in the Irish language. This is a circumstance which can neither be eluded nor concealed with the utmost exertion of criticism, under the guidance of prejudice. And surely there must be no inconsiderable degree of inconsistency in supposing this similarity of language to be accidental, while an identity of religious tenets and ceremonies is allowed. Where we find the one, we should naturally be inclined to look for the other, nor should we grant in the latter case, an affinity indicative of a common origin, when in the former we pronounce that affinity to be accidental. This accidental similarity which may be sometimes detected between languages radically different, should guard us against an implicit confidence in the reasonings of the etymologist; and the subsequent wanderings of this learned writer, will not tend to dissipate such reasonable apprehensions. But the inquiry from which the similarity in question is collected, has been conducted in a manner very different from those which have since appeared, and not less different is the nature of the conclusion. It has been proved, to the satisfaction of antiquaries who are not interested in the controversy, and to the conviction of those who may have sided with the different parties, that the resemblance was too striking to have been accidental, and too minute to preclude any doubt of a mutual affinity. The answer which has been made to this conclusion is, the answer of the inflexible disputant, who, when all his reasonings have been confuted, and all his store of exceptions has been expended, is forced to content himself with a simple repetition of his favourite positions. It has been averred, that such an
affinity

affinity is next to impossible, and in opposition to the evidence of reason, that it must not be allowed to exist. The same evidence points out an identity in the religious systems of the nations in question. We are therefore to expect, that in opposition to the general judgment of the learned, and to former self-conviction, this identity will be disallowed, and a *resemblance* be pronounced *improbable*.

Implication is however a resource which may in the event prove more effectual than a direct opposition. This appears to be the opinion of the writer of a letter to Governor Pownall, which contains among some ironical "Observations" on Irish Antiquities, the following remark relative to this subject.

" Sinking under the weight of their own im-
 " becility, and the superincumbent arguments of
 " Mr. Macpherson and Mr. Whitaker, our tra-
 " ditions were about to be consigned to eternal
 " oblivion, when they were unexpectedly re-
 " leased from the impending fate, by a discovery
 " of the affinity between the Hebrew and *Celtic**
 " languages. This was eagerly caught at by
 " the defenders of the old system, and brought
 " as an irrefragable proof of eastern descent.—
 " Our worthy member, Colonel Vallancey, with
 " that patriotic warmth which successfully car-
 " ries him through the most laborious investi-
 " gations, gave a more copious range to his ex-
 " amination of the two tongues, and discover-
 " ed an almost perfect identity among them."
 —But, " if there is any weight in the reason-
 " ings offered under the foregoing heads, the
 " Orientalism discovered in our language, in
 " our ancient religion, customs, and manners,
 " must be referred to another origin; for con-
 " sistently with reason and history, they never
 " can

See Note H.

“ can be deduced from Spain or the Phœnicians.”

How far we are to presume on this inconsistency with reason and history, we shall in the sequel inquire. But the reader will doubtless be curious to learn these “ reasonings” which have such weight as to prove the error of so very natural a conclusion. From the established character however of the letter writer, he would, with difficulty, be led to imagine that they consist solely of an octavo page of flimsy declamation, strongly seasoned with irony, and with but a small, (indeed a most minute) particle of argument, from the futile reasonings of a Macpherson. Such, nevertheless, is actually the case.

Before our author ventured to deduce a conclusion so unwarrantable, he should have in some degree instructed us concerning that other origin to which he would refer. This, however, was impossible, without having recourse to a disagreeable repetition of that sophistry, which introduced in the very same number of the *Collectanea*. Are we therefore to metamorphose into language-masters, those very scientific and communicative Phœnician sailors, whom in a similar emergency, Doctor Borlase had transformed into Emissionaries? Or are we to commit the task of instruction to the persecuted Christians of the fourth age, who have been, through the successful zeal of a modern antiquary, recently converted to paganism, and have been sent forth “ to run over the world,” in order to disseminate wherever they could procure a favourable reception, the manners, the language, and the religion of their Persian countrymen?

The letter writer, however, will not permit this. The latter is indeed a point too delicate
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for his interference. But with regard to the other, " he will not insist on the absurdity and " improbability of a few rude and ignorant " mariners occasionally visiting this isle, for " that is the utmost that can be supposed; communicating the more refined religion, language, and learning of their countrymen. " This is such a phænomenon as never did or " can occur." But from what other quarter this extraordinary instruction is to be derived, he is totally silent, and seems at a loss to conjecture. In the mean time, however, until he shall have made such a discovery, as will enable him to remove the doubts, which he has thought proper to raise concerning a subject, sufficiently clear in itself, because simple and unembarrassed with minute or subtle speculation, he cannot reasonably oppose our following the guides of this nature, which we find to direct us through the dark and almost pathless regions of antiquity and fiction.*

* See Note I.

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CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

SECTION V.

HAVING investigated those sources of information, which may assist us in forming a just scheme of the population of Ireland, and having in the course of this inquiry been led to mention the different nations, which have concurred in establishing settlements here, it remains to trace them to their different origins, and to confirm the foregoing remarks by such evidences as history and the labours of former antiquarians will be found to supply.

The most early colonies which were settled in this island, we may with confidence suppose to be of the grand nation of the Celts, by whom the western regions of Europe were inhabited. From what part they may have immediately proceeded, it is of little importance to know, nor can we, from the poverty or the deficiency of our materials, determine. We may, however, conjecture that the first settlers are to be traced to Gaul, and the adjacent continent, rather than to Britain. A people in the vicinity of the ocean is almost ever in some degree conversant in maritime expeditions; and we cannot suppose that this large and beautiful island would have remained desert for so many ages as would be adequate to the population of Britain. In whatever manner this question may be determined, we must allow, that Ireland long served as an asylum, to which at different periods, as circumstances required, new colonies

of emigrants from the adjacent nations repaired*.

The colonies of Gothic extraction which* settled in Ireland, appear from different circumstances, to have been more considerable than has been commonly supposed. I shall not however, make any particular observations on this point, as it has been recently examined with much accuracy, and in a very satisfactory manner, in the researches of Campbell, Pinkerton, and Ledwich. It will therefore, suffice, to refer to what they have written on the subject, and I have only to observe, that these Gothic settlements are to be referred to Britain, Germany, and the North.

These ingenious writers will not, however, admit of any colony from Spain. It is not on account of the situation of that country with respect to Ireland, that they are of this opinion, but because they cannot find any traces which would authenticate such migrations. This is a point which merits some investigation†.

The learned Pinkerton observes, that he can find but three names of tribes in the south of Ireland, the Luceni, Velabri, and Auteri, which approximate to others on the opposite shore of Spain, the Lucenses, Velienfes, and Autrigones; and he thinks the probability is greater in favour of the Leuci, Velo-cassi, and Autrebates of Belgic Gaul. But I am of opinion, that between the Velabri and the Velo-cassi, the resemblance is very indistinct, however it may be judged of

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* See Note K. † Their reasoning does not preclude the idea of migrations of the Celts, as well from that Peninsula, as from Gaul or Britain. These may have taken place, though it is probable they were but inconsiderable. This, however, is a subject of little importance.

the other two; and the probability in favour of the German Gauls, I think is outweighed by circumstances of an opposite tendency. He cannot find in Gaul, the Concani which are to be found in the same part of this island with the other tribes; but he asserts, that no geographer places such a people in Spain. This, however, is an oversight, which he will correct when he finds them mentioned by Mela*, by whom the Concani are placed among the Cantabri in the north of that peninsula. The Iberi, or Iverni, whom Ptolomy and Richard place in the same part of Ireland, in the county of Kerry, the learned writer does not find sufficient evidence to trace to any origin. I strongly suspect that it was a common name for the neighbouring tribes which have been already noticed, and which it is probable came from Spain: and I am the more confirmed in this conjecture, from the similar instances of the Menapii and Cauci, being called by the neighbouring Irish, Garmani, or Germans, as they originally were†.

It is perhaps, from Spain that we are also to deduce the origin of the Hermi, as from Dio Cassius§, it would appear, that a tribe of that name was expelled by Julius Cæsar. They were followed at sea by that great commander who steered northward, and doubled the Promontory, now known by the name of Cape Finisterre. And as from this it is probable that the Hermi
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* *Cantabrorum* aliquot populi amnesque sunt, sed quorum nomina nostro ore concipi nequeunt. Per *Concanos* et *Salenos*, *Saunium*, per *Autrigones* et *Origenomescos* *Nanasa* descendit.—Mela, lib. 3, c. 1. See Note. L

† O'Connor's Dissert. p. 175.

§ Lib. 37. This notice I owe to Colonel Vallancey, in his late voluminous "Vindication."

mini did not land in Spain, it should seem that they went for Ireland, whither the northern course which they bore, would speedily conduct them. Accordingly, their name is not unknown among the ancient Irish historians.

The only objection which remains to be urged against this Spanish colony, thus settled, as it should appear, in the southern parts of Ireland, is, that the traces of the Cantabrian, or Basque, are but very indistinct in the Irish tongue. Lluyd endeavoured to shew the contrary, but in this he has in a great measure failed. Yet I can by no means think the examination is fair, as we have not any remains of the *old* Cantabrian, between which and the Irish, to institute a comparison, and as the ductility of a speech merely oral, is too great to allow to it that permanency which is indispensable for our purpose. And in the present circumstances, when we consider this material point, the time which has elapsed since a separation was made of the people, by whom the language was used, and that on the one side it has been merged in a tongue remarkable for its copiousness, and not less for its various origin, we should not expect to find many traces of mutual connection. It may be further observed, that Lloyd would scarcely have proceeded so far, if he had not some foundation for his design. It were easy to enlarge on these objections to the property of relying on his failure, and of deducing from it those consequences to which it would seem naturally to lead.* But these remarks will, it is presumed, be found sufficient to point out the indecisive evidence of such arguments.

It is not to be supposed, as different Irish writers have done, that to the Iberians of Spain,
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the Irish were indebted for the Orientalism discovered in their religion and language. This familiarity is to be traced to another source, and to a people confessedly deriving their origin and usages from the East. Those writers who maintain such an opinion with respect to the Iberians, and who are willing to connect the history of Ireland with that of this people, have not thought it necessary, or they may have deemed it inexpedient to examine this point in detail, so that we have found but few evidences adduced to favour their conjecture. Satisfied as I am, that their historical system is in this point exceptionable, I do not think it incumbent on me to raise to the rank of an *objection*, founded on a detail of argument, and requiring, from its importance, a minute discussion, this unfounded hypothesis; nor shall I here weigh the *fables*, cited by Strabo*, with the testimony of Pliny†, the decision of Appian‡, with the opinions of Vossius§. An investigation of such points must be deferred till these antiquarians shall have exhibited them in such a light, as to render them more worthy of regard, and superior to the many similar trivial controversies, with which the subject of our inquiry is embarrassed. I shall in the mean time only observe, that the Iberians of Spain, do not seem to have been the same with a nation of that name which was settled in Asia, and that we have not any authority for supposing, that the peculiarities in Irish history and antiquities, are to be deduced from them. I mention the Iberian colonies in Ireland only, because there appears to have been a settlement of that people in

* I. 61. See also XV. 686.

† Hist. Nat. III. c. 1.

‡ In Iberic. *init.*

§ D. Indolol. cap. 33.

in the south western angle of this island, in that part of it which is situated most favourably with relation to Spain. In that angle, we find there were several names of tribes which corresponded with others on the opposite shore, and we have considered the arguments for their being derived from a country which thus invited an intimacy of connection. A colony of this kind, perhaps, remained for a considerable series of time independent of the adjacent tribes; and when they insensibly merged in the great mass, their customs, their language, and religion, would little vary its general complexion.

A valuable antiquary in his late inquiry concerning the origin of those nations, by whom Scotland was possessed, judiciously observes, that “ the antiquities of a nation may be considered “ as either *poetical*, or *historical*. Thus the origin “ of the Picts, admits of a poetical and an historical division. The poetical, is that which “ traces them from Colchis, to Scandinavia: the “ historical, finds them in Norway, and traces “ them from Norway to Scotland. The reader,” continues this author, “ is requested to “ attend to this division, that he may not accuse “ the author of lending historical faith to poetical evidence; but judge impartially, and “ give the poetical part only poetical faith. “ It is fully sufficient, that we find the Picts in “ Norway, and trace them to Scotland. History requires no more.” The justice of these observations is so obvious, as to claim the assent of every candid reader, and they are here introduced, as they will assist us in the solution of our present inquiry.

The fables in which the expeditions and achievements of the celebrated Hercules, or Sesostris are involved, justly assign the accounts
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of them which we have received to the rank of poetical antiquities, and though they have exercised the ingenuity, and called forth the exertions of some of the greatest ornaments of the literary world, will, from their nature, ever remain dubious and unascertained. Almost every nation supposes itself to have been connected with this renowned hero, and such is the similarity of the exploits of different conquerors, when blended in general description, or such the diversity occasioned by the imperfection of tradition, that it is impossible to determine with accuracy, whether this far-famed warrior, was the same individual, or whether the achievements ascribed to him, are not common to different adventurers. The splendor of these achievements, adorned with the colourings of fancy, was such as to have pointed out this hero, as the grand personage to whom should be referred the various events, which in the history of every nation, tradition has disguised, by an admixture with the marvelous; and the manner in which his expeditions were conducted, (as he wandered through the greater part of the then known world) by extending his fame, and making each country the scene of his exploits, was peculiarly favourable for the construction of such fabulous systems. In Asia, he was well known. In Greece, in Italy, and in Spain, the poets have given magnificent relations of his formidable power, and his consequent exertions. Even in the more northern regions of Europe, he was not totally without fame. But the nations which were more peculiarly the scene of his exploits, and in which his memory was particularly revered, were those which were settled along the shore of the Mediterranean, in the northern countries of Africa. Here

Here he was distinguished for the variety of exploits which he achieved, and to him was referred whatever was obscured through the silence of history, whatever tradition detailed on subjects, which though once well understood, had long been forgotten, and had been involved in error. Of these nations there were different branches, some of which appear to have merged in the general mass of original settlers, and others to have been preserved more unmixed, which considered Hercules as their ancient leader, under whose command they had been detached from their former connections in the East, connections which they long remembered, and had settled in these regions. From their own annals, Sallust has extracted information of this sort, which is highly curious and interesting; and what he has thus extracted, is confirmed by the *casual notices* of Mela, Pliny, and different other writers, whose testimonies must be allowed to have much weight, in corroborating what is more *amply detailed*, respecting the opinion of these nations concerning their origin. That their origin was the same which they asserted, we have ample room to believe; but being ignorant of the circumstances which attended the different migrations they naturally called fiction to their assistance, and represented Hercules as their conductor. Such is the general statement of their history, in which the *poetical* is introduced for the purpose of supplying the deficiencies, which time, and a barbarous state of society had occasioned.

It is generally supposed, that Hercules was accustomed to settle parts of his army in different countries, which he visited in the course of his conquests. This opinion appears, however, to be very inconsistent with history, and
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even with itself. For had this universal conqueror thus detached from his army, such large bodies as would be required for the formation of particular and independent settlements, and had he continued this conduct through the whole of his expedition, he must have returned home, if his return in such a state were possible, in circumstances very different from those by which his triumphant arrival was distinguished. And that he would supply the loss of these detached bodies, by levies from the inimical nations, whom, though his conduct had vanquished them, yet his arts could hardly conciliate, and his prudence would scarcely permit to incorporate with his army, is scarcely to be believed. On a particular occasion, indeed, such an incident may have taken place; and where it did, the event was particularly and strongly marked, as well by circumstances as by the testimony of different writers. Such was the case with the Colchian colony, the evidences for which, as left behind by Sesostris, are perhaps different from those which can be produced for the Oriental settlements in Africa and Spain.

These fables concerning this conduct of Hercules, in his African and Spanish expedition, seem to be introduced, partly for the purpose of supplying the deficiency of historic accounts relative to their migration, and partly in order to embellish their origin, and to raise them to greater dignity in the estimation of the neighbouring states. However this may have been, it is certain, that so far as came within the bounds of their own knowledge, their information deserves regard. They knew that in language, in customs, and of consequence in origin,

gin, they differed from the more early settlers of Africa. The similitude in these respects, in those nations of the East, of which the Punic was a branch, they would at once recognize, and tradition would confirm them in deducing their ancestors from the same stock. When they looked backwards, they could recover but few of those events by which their migration was marked; and it is very observable, that in every successive age, while the ground-work remained exactly the same, those parts were frequently changed, which were subjected to, and had invited the inroads of fancy. While the tradition of their real origin has been uniformly maintained, from a conviction of its being fully supported by every possible evidence, in one age, the interposition of Hercules was required; in another, Procopius introduces events very different, and produced by causes too obvious to be mentioned; and at periods still later, Leo Africanus, and Marmol varied yet farther these concomitant circumstances.

The ground-work of these traditions, supported as it was by their own judgment, and the general opinion of their neighbours, is allowed by the various historians, and geographers, who have noticed this subject. That these different writers should pass over in silence, in some cases, and in others, that they should mention the fabulous, or obscure narratives, which related to the formation of these settlements, was what was to be expected; but in treating of such a subject in historical inquiry, it will be necessary for us to proceed further, and to substitute in the stead of these fictitious events, a more rational and probable supposition. When we advert to the people
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from whom these African settlers are universally allowed to be deduced, we find them to be that great family of the human race, which was generally termed the Assyrian, and which while the particular tribes, as the Syrians, the Phœnicians, the Arabs, &c. differed from each other, as much as civilization is diverse from barbarism, was still the same in origin, and the grand features of resemblance which characterize the distinct races of mankind. When we regard the situation of this people, with relation to the African and Spanish shores, we cannot fail to be struck with the happy position which thus invited mutual connection. And when the history of these nations is consulted, when we recur to the general opinion of every age, and inquire how far these advantages of situation were improved, we shall find that there was no country which maintained with another, in these circumstances, such an intimate correspondence. In the earliest ages, perhaps, colonies were sent forth from the shores of the Levant, for the purpose of occupying these western regions. This intercourse was facilitated, and these colonies were the more considerable from the dexterity of these nations in the art of navigation, an art by which, from immemorial ages they were distinguished. Some of the colonies, in the course of events, vied with the parent states in commerce, in arts, and in luxury. But if Carthage, if Utica and Leptis, were cities of such importance, it was only because the foundation was laid in the grandeur and refinement of the Phœnician states, from which they derived their origin. There were other tribes of the same great nation, which were far behind these in their progress to civilization, and which
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from various circumstances, whether from a preference of a roving, unsettled life, or from disadvantages in their situation, never attempted to dispute with their flourishing neighbours, that pre-eminence which was the reward of assiduity and industry. These tribes were settled in the same regions which the Phœnicians had once possessed, and they seem to have continued nearly in the same situation, and the same circumstances, from which commerce and the arts had elevated their more fortunate countrymen. To enter into their domestic history, is not here requisite; and it remains only to be observed, that various colonies of this race appear to have occasionally migrated from their native seats, and to have settled in Africa. Without the assistance of these, it would perhaps have been difficult for the more polished settlers on the same coast, to have extended their dominion, and to have increased their consequence to such a degree, as would otherwise justly excite our surprize. These colonists, however this may have been, had migrated, and had formed settlements on these shores, as well before, as in periods subsequent to the foundation of the more distinguished states; and in the same circumstances of inferiority*, they long continued to preserve the history of their real origin, a history, which, though intermixed with the fictitious exploits of Hercules, whose interposition they deemed necessary to solve present appearances, was from this circumstance to derive a
still

* There is, however, some doubt, whether they had not been at the time of their migrations in a more flourishing state than in subsequent periods. Of one of these tribes, Mela observes,—“Pharusii, aliquando Hercule ad Hesperiam tendente, dices, nunc inculti.” III. 18.

still further corroboration, as it evinced in that respect, their connexions with the nations of which they had once made a part, and which distinguished with the same honour, and the same pre-eminence, this celebrated Hero*.

Nor were these settlements confined to the African shore of the Mediterranean. Spain, equal in respect to an advantageous situation with respect to Asia, and in the neighbourhood also of this southern coast, was colonized by some tribes from the same country, and of the same extraction†. These tribes, of consequence, introduced with them the customs, the religion, the language‡, to which they had been always accustomed; and as change of climate and situation made no alteration in their adherence to national usages, they may be traced in their migration still further, and we recognize irrefragable evidences of their final settlement in Ireland. The traditions, the history, the religion, the language of the Irish, and the various vestiges of ancient usages which still subsist, forcibly point to such a migration, and that migration, by every historical monument which remains, is referred to Spain. Even in the traditions of the Irish, and those of these Oriental settlers in Africa and Spain, as detailed by ancient writers, a coincidence highly striking is to be observed, and it points with much clearness to their ancient connexion.

* This detail of their history, of which we have spoken, and which they always preserved, is confirmed by the more casual notices, as well as the more direct testimonies of various writers, of Appian, (civ. lib. 4.) Dio, (l. 48.) Pliny; (V. 8.) Strabo, (III. 157.) Me'a, &c. Isidore, (Orig. l. 9, c. 2.)

† Sall. Jugurth. c. 20. Strab. III. 157. Pliny, Hist. Nat. III. 1, and V. 8. See Note N.

‡ See Note O.

on.* That such colonies as the authority of ancient history proves to have been settled in Spain, should, in the course of various events, have been obliged to remove from their establishment there, is not improbable; especially when we consider the state of that kingdom in these early ages, and that disposition so much addicted to change, and so fond of variety which characterizes unpolished nations. And the evidences which have been adduced, strongly indicate that such was actually the case, when we find them settled in another region, in a country which was so favourably situated with regard to the peninsula which they had resolved to abandon; in a country, which, if they did thus resolve upon emigration, was perhaps, that alone which would be suitable for their purpose. The shores of the Mediterranean, were sufficiently occupied; Gaul, at that time, was overstocked with inhabitants, and instead of receiving new supplies in its population, was sending forth colonies to possess, or to overrun every country which presented to them a desirable establishment; and Britain, more unfavourably situated than Ireland, was doubtless more fully peopled, and for various reasons, was less eligible than the smaller and more inviting island.

To enter into the history of the more unrefined colonies of Oriental origin, who moved towards the western shore of the Mediterranean, to such an extent as has been done, was deemed necessary, because, such a view not only gives us a clear and precise comprehension of the settlements in Ireland, concerning which we enquire, but also, because it exposes the various errors

* See Note P,

errors concerning the Scots,* the Gadelians, &c. of whom Irish national antiquaries have given such imperfect and erroneous details. We find, from the most decisive authorities, from the imperfect notices, as well as from the more fully and extensive testimonies of ancient writers, that there were established in Spain, settlements of Oriental extraction, which corresponded in every respect, in their most ancient history and traditions, in language, in usages, in religion, with other settlements of the same origin, which the Irish of every age continue to deduce from that Peninsula. This resemblance, therefore, will warrant us in allowing the identity of these colonies, and it will, in consequence, give to Irish antiquities, that precision and systematic consistency, which have been so long and so greatly desired. The grand objection which is urged against Irish history, by every candid enquirer, is the seeming impracticability of deducing colonists from the shores of the Levant, to this sequestered island, and the peculiar nature of the traditions, in which the accounts of such an expedition were involved. Of the whole force of such an objection, I am perfectly aware; nor am I less fully apprized of the suspicious point of view, in which a history of this kind is liable to be considered. Influenced by such considerations, I had, I confess, in some measure, determined to disbelieve every thing which was referred to such a colony as is here mentioned, nor was it without much caution, and till after some hesitation, that I admitted the conviction arising from the evidences which I have already stated, and which I found could not be passed over on
such

* See Note Q.

on such slight grounds as mere appearance and superficial observation would furnish. When this conviction, however, with respect to the existence of such a colony was admitted, there still remained much doubt concerning the origin of that colony; and this doubt was not a little encreased, through the erroneous views of the subject which had been furnished to us by our antiquarians, as well as by the known circumstance, that this body of emigrants could not possibly have been the same with the refined nations which anciently maintained a traffic with these islands. A more minute investigation of this point was therefore necessary; and this investigation fully shewed, that my conviction of the emigration of such a colony was firmly supported by concomitant and corroborative evidences of no indecisive nature. It fully proved every thing relative to this colony in Spain, which Irish history, and the foregoing historic guides had taught me to expect; and so striking and minute was the coincidence in various circumstances, with relation to their history, their traditions, their general manners, and the circumstances of their establishment in that country, that the history of the one people was clearly an introduction to that of the other.

When therefore we examine the subject more closely, we find that much of that air of improbability which strikes upon a superficial view, disappears, and that this history is more firmly supported than many others which may have a more conciliating aspect. That we should have in these islands a complete system of oriental religions, tenets, and rites; that we should find in Ireland, from whence was extended to the western world, such a remarkable admixture in its language, originating undoubtedly from
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the same cause, and that we should here, even at the present day, meet with such vestiges of eastern superstition, vestiges apparent to the slightest observation;—circumstances such as these should indeed excite our surprize. Much less remarkable would it be to find a colony arriving here from Spain, where we have proof that a people of such customs, language, and religion was established, and whence in the course of events they might be obliged to depart. Such is a summary of the whole matter, when stripped of the various circumstances with which such an enquiry as the present must be connected, and presented to the view of the superficial observer. The reality of the former extraordinary proofs of the existence of such a body of emigrants is certain: it is that which calls for our surprize. The manner in which they were introduced is by no means remarkable.

This emigration was, we may suppose, conducted in the same manner with the various others which were accomplished in these unsettled ages. At such an early period, Ireland was probably but very thinly inhabited; and the traditions which are handed down of the circumstances which attended this establishment, throw some light on that event. They arrived, it appears from these, at a juncture when the different tribes were engaged in a civil war. In such favourable circumstances, it was easy for them, with the assistance of a moderate portion of policy, to obtain a superiority over the whole, and to secure to themselves an establishment on the most stable foundation.

Such, then, is the scheme of the colonization of Ireland, founded on those evidences which seem best calculated to ensure certainty in the conclusion of this investigation. With such
proofs

proofs to produce in favour of its truth, it must be allowed to bespeak some attention to the remaining disquisitions on Irish antiquities. It not only provides for the various events which may be supposed to have occurred from its vicinity to the adjacent countries, but it also places on a solid basis, the grand and leading outlines which distinguish the present inquiry from those which are instituted concerning the early history of these nations. And it not only points out such a basis, but by viewing it more accurately, and with greater attention, it likewise does away that seeming air of improbability and fiction which has deterred so many observers from making a more minute and satisfactory examination.

C H A P T E R III.

S E C T I O N I.

OF the various obstacles to the success of Irish writers on the subject of their ancient history, there is perhaps none more forcible than the prejudice conceived from such pretensions to remote antiquity, to superior civilization, and superior refinement, at a period when the greater part of mankind was immersed in barbarism and ignorance, long anterior to the æra of Roman, or even of Athenian grandeur, and beyond the limits of all profane HISTORY besides their own.* Were we implicitly to rely on the accounts which we receive from these, we might with as much propriety resign ourselves to the direction and the imposition of so many others of different nations, whom the hot spirit of patriotic affection has stimulated, and blind credulity encouraged, to promulgate fictions which have met in turns with the most respectful veneration, and the lowest contempt.

On this subject, much declamation has been lavished by these writers; and yet it is this which their opponents have found most useful in promoting the success of their design of involving in scepticism and obscurity, the whole of their accounts both true and fictitious. To the effects which such a line of conduct has produced, these antiquaries cannot be insensible, though they still persevere in laying down as a funda-

* With the exception indeed of the Chinese.—See Walsh's prospect, p. 6.

fundamental principle in their historical system, this advanced degree of refinement, without establishing which, all their labours will be expended in vain. Thus every inducement, whether of interest or of reason, they continue when weighed against the suggestions of national vanity, to consider as trifling and immaterial.

Whether the present attempt to elucidate from the obscurity of antiquity, this early portion of the Irish Annals, will be received by those to which such inquiries are more peculiarly interesting, according to its professed design, or whether it will be considered by such as an insult, the author is wholly at a loss to conjecture. This, however, he may venture to observe, that as he has endeavoured in all his researches to keep truth in view, he has been occasionally led to depart from those paths so frequently trodden by his predecessors; and if in any instance he should have committed an involuntary offence against the vanity which delights in dwelling on an illustrious ancestry, he trusts to this disposition as a sufficient apology. Supported by a confidence in the rectitude of his intentions, he therefore cannot but pronounce, as far as a deliberate consideration of what has been advanced on both sides will warrant the decision, that the ancient Irish were a barbarous people. Should a contrary opinion be adopted, we must call in question the express and concurrent testimonies of antiquity; and we must oppose the testimonies even of these national writers themselves.

The unfavourable accounts which the ancients have left of the state of civilization which in their time obtained in this island, and the manifest exaggerations of these authors, are too well known to require a repetition. But it signifies

nifies little to exclaim against the impurity of the sources from whence their information was procured, and to triumph over their exaggerations is equally foreign to the purpose. The Romans certainly did not visit this island themselves, and they could but detail the accounts respecting *it*, as they received them from others. A more intimate acquaintance would indeed be indispensibly necessary to form clear and just ideas of the various and minute shades of character which diversify domestic habits and the manners of nations; and to delineate from the reports and the relations of the *mere observer*, and the credulous or ill-informed traveller, those circumstances *only* which would be requisite for exhibiting a distinct and perspicuous view of national peculiarities and dispositions, requires a mind divested of prejudices, and possessed of no inferior portion of philosophic observation. In the present instance, however, we do not look for such a detail of circumstances, or such descriptions of the manners and disposition, of the Irish, because our principal view is to attain a just idea of their GENERAL character, whether they were immersed in barbarism, like the neighbouring nations, or whether they were conspicuous for a superior degree of refinement, and for the splendor of their acquirements in arts and in wisdom. To decide this point, the notices which the Roman geographers and historians received, were fully sufficient; for it were preposterous to suppose that they would receive no information of so surprizing and remarkable a circumstance, in which besides they were nearly interested. During the long series of years that they ruled over Britain, they must doubtless have attained some notions of their character, and these notions are fully sufficient to
decide

decide, where the question admits of no other alternative, than a general decision in favour of civilization or of barbarism. Tacitus*, in recording the well known incident of the banishment of one of the Irish princes who repaired to Agricola, clearly points to one of these events, from which precise information, and that information unembarrassed with the credulity or the ignorance of navigators and travellers, might be obtained. What could be collected from this event, as well as from others sources which lay open, this excellent historian has informed us. In subsequent periods, the Romans were harrassed by the invasions of the Irish, and Britain was often ravaged by bands of adventurers from this island. Here then their acquaintance was also personal, and the information which they might collect cannot be supposed to be erroneous. Other sources of information equally authentic were doubtless accessible, and were occasioned by that mutual connection which results from proximity of situation. Their *personal* acquaintance must therefore give to their GENERAL testimonies unanswerable weight, and these testimonies confirm the reports of the first discoverers, and decide against any considerable superiority which Ireland maintained over the adjacent nations.

This authority is still more decisive from the unanimous and concordant testimony of every writer, without exception, who has noticed the subject. Motives of policy might be conjectured to have occasioned at one period this silence with regard to such an alarming, or such an inviting appearance, as this island would present to

* See note R.

to the Romans; at another time, the validity of the relator might be impeached; and with a subsequent writer, prejudice may be supposed to have possessed such influence as to have weakened the regard which he owed to truth. Suppositions such as these, might be brought forward if the mention of this island had been confined to one or two writers, or had its situation been such as to have precluded the PERSONAL information of successive generations of the enlightened Romans. Neither of these pleas can however be alleged; and we must therefore, on the supposition of our national writers, be totally at a loss to account for the conclusive evidence which arises from a concordance so remarkable. For how was it possible that circumstances of this kind, which must have arrested the attention, and attracted the curiosity of all, should, by every writer without exception, from those whose information was the most early, down to the lowest periods of the Roman empire, be totally neglected? Or if such silence be deemed inconclusive, how has it happened that by many of them it has been wholly denied?

That the natives of Ireland were not in these early ages remarkable for any considerable progress in refinement and politeness, is then demonstrably clear to all who will not indulge in that historical scepticism, which disregarding or disbelieving truths of the most self-evident nature, would wantonly involve the annals of every age in an indistinguishable mass of falsehood and error. Yet will not Irish writers allow the validity of such a conclusion, however just, because it militates against those fallacious honours of antiquity which they have been so long accustomed to regard with the fondest sensations of

of the most implicit veneration. Let us therefore examine their own accounts. Let us not be biaſſed by the mere opinion of any writer of whatever party, of Hume and Macpherson, of O'Halloran and O'Connor, or even of Usher and Ware. They cannot object to an appeal to thoſe deſcriptions of national manners which they have themſelves preſerved, and which they exhibit as infallible criteria of that refinement and civilization for which they contend. Should their romantic pretenſions be overthrown by their own teſtimony, it is to be expected that we ſhall be no longer fatigued with a repetition of theſe turgid deſcriptions of Utopian grandeur.

It is a maxim undoubtedly true, that the condition of the people may be always eſtimated from the nature and effects of their government. Let us therefore inveſtigate this ſubject as far as relates to the conſtitution, and from the materials which are furniſhed by the annals, of the nation in queſtion.

A late panegyriſt on the ancient ſtate of the Iriſh, tells us, that their conſtitution “ was planned by wiſdom; its operation was admirable under able governors; its abuſe fatal under weak ones.”* This ſignal proof of the operation of wiſdom is certainly curious; and if the remark be allowed to be founded in juſtice, it will appear, that the kings paramount of this iſland were a line of ſuch princes as almoſt diſgraced human nature; as nearly the whole ſeries was aſſaſſinated or ſlain in diſputes with the inferior ſovereigns. So general indeed was his termination of their reigns, that our attention is particularly directed to a few individuals
whoſe

* See O'Connor's diſſertations, p. 64, edit. 1766.

whose more peaceable conclusion was considered as a remarkable circumstance. Justice to these monarchs however will not permit us to acquiesce in the exculpation of the constitution at their expence. The monarchy was elective, and, even in the life time of the sovereign, his successor was chosen in the same manner. The like custom was observed with regard to the various inferior princes, among whom the island was parcelled. From this brief statement may be quickly perceived the general state of such a nation, a nation in which rivals to the throne of the reigning sovereign were systematically raised, and in which the power of the principal or nominally principal governor was opposed at the pleasure of the subordinate chieftains. A constitution which reconciled all the defects of the feudal system with others peculiar to itself, without enjoying any of the advantages by which these defects were rendered tolerable; a government of which the leading provisions were calculated for the promotion of incessant strife, and to ensure a continuous and unvaried scene of intestine commotion, seems designed for purposes far different from the cultivation of the arts and the progress of refinement. Of those supreme kings who reigned anterior to the introduction of christianity not one seventh part was suffered to die a natural death, the remaining sovereigns having been murdered or destroyed in battle. This rare instance of continued tumult at once will give us some imperfect idea of that envied happiness which these islanders enjoyed. But when we enlarge the picture, when we cast our eyes on the contests of so many subordinate princes, what a scene of horror and blood, of cruelty and barbarism does it not exhibit.

T.

To the reader versed in historical disquisitions no other evidence will be necessary to enable him to form a proper judgment of the ancient state of this people. Of all species of war, that which is carried on by a nation armed against itself, is the most effectual for the proscription of every instruction of refinement, every principle of justice: in the lapse of a few years it overturns in the most flourishing states the firmest foundations of public happiness. Surely then in such a small island inclosing or imprisoning a number of these scourges of the human race who were mutually employed in destroying the subjects of each other, and who were never in safety themselves from the prevalence of ill directed ambition and the effects of that violence or that perfidy from which they seldom escaped, and in such a succession of ages which yielded the same unvaried prospect, the traces of a refined and polished state of society, had such ever existed, must have been long eradicated, and the scene be distinguished only by rapine, ignorance and barbarity.

One more feature in the delineation of this enviable state of national affairs we shall particularly notice. We have never heard of any nation which has been able to elevate itself to the rank of civilized states, unless agriculture, or commerce, or both were the objects of their immediate concern. In either case it is indispensable that the people should be collected in cities and towns. Without mutual assistance and CONSTANT vicinity, the arts cannot be cultivated to any advantage: and in order to excel in husbandry, it is likewise necessary that this state of society should have been established, because otherwise there would be no demand on the cultivator for the excess of his produce, and
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consequently there would be no encouragement for him to introduce improvement in agriculture, or even to engage in it as an occupation. But, the Irish “ had no cities, or large towns in the “ earlier ages ;” * like other unpolished nations, they were scattered over the face of the country, or to use the language of declamation, “ in “ every district the occupiers lived apart, near “ enough to assist, not too near to incommode “ one another.” † The inference is then plain, that the ancient Irish did not cultivate the soil, or engage in commerce to such an extent, as to elevate them above the rank of a nation, almost constantly in war, and collecting from pasture, with a trifling degree of tillage, a bare provision for their necessities.

The writer just quoted, conscious of this objection, and of the weight it should be allowed, takes care to inform us, that in these unfavourable circumstances, “ Civility was preserved, “ through the frequent custom of bringing the “ people together on one spot, in their camps, “ their donachs, and particularly in their assemblies at Teamor, Taltion, Flachgta, Eamania, Cruachain, &c. They were temporary “ cities, (so to speak) where all national affairs “ relating to war or politics, property and commerce, were adjusted : And this custom kept “ the people from falling into barbarism.” § How inadequate to such a grand purpose were these trifling meetings, every intelligent reader must perceive. Could we suppose that there existed such a community of *human beings*, as those who are represented to be scattered over the country,

* O’Conor’s Differt. p. 104. † Ibid. p. 105. § Ibid. p. 106.

country, dispersed and unconnected with each other, but, unlike the Irish, free from the horrible effects of a never ceasing political turbulence, and enjoying in tranquility, that pleasure which results from the cultivation of literature and science, yet, to perpetuate among successive generations, even of *such* a people, that refinement which had been once introduced, this expedient would perhaps be scarcely sufficient. How striking then is the contrast when we contemplate these islanders. We are to suppose the arts to be cultivated with success, and intellectual studies to be prosecuted with ardour, among a people situated in circumstances which are totally inimical to such pursuits in nations in the full enjoyment of advantages to which the people in question were entirely strangers: We are to suppose them surmounting every disadvantage, and equaling in their former progress, those states, which, with far less political obstacles to combat, find it impossible to make use of the distinguished superiority of which they are possessed. How far such a supposition is admissible, be it referred even to this writer to decide.

It is certain, that at different periods subsequent to the introduction of Christianity, Ireland was immersed in that state of barbarism to which we allude. The accounts of such periods, however true, "do not," says our author, "conclude against former times of less confusion and barbarism."* But what time, let it be asked, was less barbarous than these more recent ages? Should we measure national prosperity, by the ratio of the violent deaths of the monarchs, there would not be found to have prevailed

* O'Connor's Dissert. p. 105.

prevailed one half of the confusion of former times, in those ages which were subsequent to the diffusion of the knowledge of the true religion.

From what has been said, we may easily perceive why in later times the buildings of all, or most of their maritime towns, should be ascribed to the Danes or Ostmen, rather than to the Irish. The former were a maritime people, were moreover settled in a foreign country, where it would be dangerous for them to live dispersed and separate from each other, and, by this situation, were enabled to preserve the necessary intercourse with their countrymen, or to receive from them the requisite supplies. But poor indeed is the ambition of those who are desirous of the honour of being the reputed founders of these *Cities*. What were these cities, we may perhaps learn from the description of foreign writers. But as their information might probably be rejected by the advocates for Irish refinement, it may be most adviseable to learn from their own testimony, every thing with which the present subject is connected. For this purpose we must again have recourse to the dissertations so frequently mentioned already.

“ In a country where magistrates where elective, not hereditary, durable structures *could*
 “ *not* well take place. As the possession was
 “ temporary, so was the building. And so far
 “ did inveterate custom prevail among this people, that even after the reception of Christianity, they could not be induced to build
 “ their churches and monasteries of more durable materials than their own habitations.”*

Accordingly,

* O'Connor's Dissert. p. 105.

Accordingly, “ the buildings of the ancient
 “ Scots, were for use solely, not for ostentation.
 “ They built their houses of timber, as several
 “ nations of Europe have done till very late-
 “ ly, and as some do to this day. Such mate-
 “ rials were near at hand, were least expensive,
 “ and soonest erected. They did not conceive
 “ that *real* magnificence consisted in great heaps
 “ of *stone*, artfully disposed, and closely cement-
 “ ed;” and yet their skill in *Lignarian* architec-
 ture was great, “ or, that real grandeur receiv-
 “ ed any diminution from the humility of its
 “ habitation.”* Here certainly is a writer, of
 whom it may justly be said,—*caput inter nubila*
condit,—who soars far above our sphere. For
 who is there in this degenerate and barbarous
 age, who would not prefer being an inhabitant
 of these wooden or clay huts, when dressed in
 all the arts of differtation, and adorned with
 all the flowers of fancy, to the possession of
 these piles of stone, “ artfully disposed, and
 “ closely cemented,” among which his lot is
 cast, so much beneath the regard of a philo-
 sopher, so repugnant to the principles of true
 grandeur?

Equally splendid is the delineation of the
 manners and disposition of the Irish; equally
 free, it may be added from the luxuriance of
 fancy, and the exaggerations of prejudice. Like
 the foregoing descriptions, it aims at reconcil-
 ing in an incongruous and heterogeneous mix-
 ture, the advantages of a civilized, and those
 of an unpolished state of society. And to make
 the mass still more discordant, it would care-
 fully exclude those inconveniencies to which
 both are *necessarily* incident. Yet, admitting all
 that

* O'Connor's Dissert. p. 104.

that has been said on the subject as truth, what is the result of this self-confuted encomium? Does it prove, that among the nations at large there were diffused that humanity, that love of order, that general politeness which characterize civilized states?—No. This panegyrical description of the ancient state of Ireland, shews that its inhabitants were dispersed over the whole country, unconnected with each other, and pursuing none of those occupations which are essential to the existence of even a moderate portion of civilization; it shews that they did not cultivate those arts which are the criterion of refinement, and that even their most sumptuous edifices were constructed of timber and clay, materials exclusively used by barbarous nations; and it clearly evinces, that the natives, under the jurisdiction of various chieftains, among whom they were parcelled, were incessantly involved in all the miseries of intestine commotion, and were at all times exposed to the ravages and the devastation, consequent of the reiterated inroads, which almost entirely occupied the attention of their ambitious tyrants.*

Such self-refuted details, become the romantic politician, declaiming in praise of a fancied Utopia, rather than the cool and temperate disquisitor on a subject which should wholly exclude these warm fallies of imagination, heated by party. Argument seems almost superfluous on such a subject; and to those who will be inclined to censure the author for applying reasoning, where ridicule should be more properly used, I can only apologize, by observing, that the irksome task of opposing these national antiquarians, with weapons so seemingly disproportionate, is the consequence of a conviction which they entertain, and which a different treatment

* See Note S.

treatment may possibly encrease, but can never eradicate.

The various writers who justly explode these romantic pretensions to ancient refinement and splendor, conclude from thence, that those assertions which regard the acquaintance with literature of the pagan Irish, are equally false. But, though I allow the premises to be indisputably true, I can by no means regard the inference as just. That this opposition is not without reason, is, I presume, easily to be evinced, though it seems to have hitherto occurred to but few of our antiquarians.

It is a mistake, which however general, very little consideration is required to rectify, that letters must necessarily be unknown among unpolished nations. Various instances might be adduced to confirm the observation; but we do not in the present case require any other than that which relates to the subject itself. The diffusion of christianity, we may with justice suppose, was eventually productive of favourable effects, on the disposition of the barbarous natives of Ireland. But the change which was thus produced, must necessarily have been slow. This introduction of the true religion, was not attended with any violent political revolution. Nothing was changed except what regarded the simple reception of a new religious system among the people at large. Yet, was it in such circumstances that the Irish literati monopolized almost all the learning of the western world; and it was in such circumstances, that Ireland itself acquired the splendid title of *INSULA SANCTORUM ET DOCTORUM*.

The reasons of this seeming incongruity were, that letters were introduced here, with all the

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advantages

advantages which they had received from the assiduous cultivation of an enlightened people; and that in Ireland, notwithstanding its barbarity, they were almost exclusive confined to a body of men, whose interests, and whose inclination, led them to be thus careful of their preservation. If these reasons will apply to the same people in their pagan state, it will then be evident that letters might *possibly* have been cultivated, notwithstanding all the disadvantages with which they were to struggle, and notwithstanding the state of affairs seems in the general opinion, to have effectually precluded any knowledge of them. To evince this possibility, is the whole of what is, in this place, proposed.

Whether Druidism was introduced into Ireland in the manner which has been already stated, or whether, according to the extravagant supposition, that the whole detail of its mysteries was communicated to the rude natives of this, and the neighbouring isle, through the means of Phœnician traders, is not in the present case material. On either supposition it must be allowed, that a knowledge of letters might have been also introduced. The colony which brought hither the various characteristics of their origin, which we now recognize, would not, it is probable, forget the use of this important invention. And that those traders, however illiterate, who could thus communicate to these barbarous islanders, an intimate acquaintance with the voluminous arcana of their countrymen, were qualified for the difficult task of instructing them in the use of letters, will not be disputed. Thus far then the parallel will hold. We are in the next place to inquire whether the seeds cast in such unfavourable

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able foil, were left to the mercy of chance, or whether their further growth might not have been carefully watched and encouraged.

Here too we find a similar institution from which might certainly have been produced similar effects. In a nation, where barbarism and ignorance overspread the people at large, there existed a community, artful and ambitious, to whom in their efforts to procure for themselves the most unbounded influence, such an invention would have been not less acceptable than they would find that it was necessary. By this well known community, science appears to have been considered as a *trade*, and when by all of their body it was, (as in every such state is the case) disregarded or despised, they would find little difficulty in concealing what interested them so highly, from the multitude. According to the reports of the Irish themselves, this was the state of things; for literature, like a mechanical profession, was confined to particular families to which it was a hereditary study.

The learning and literary studies of the Druids of the neighbouring states, have been treated with some respect by the different writers who have mentioned this subject.* Whether they were acquainted with letters or not, is a point much contested; but it must be observed, that these controversies do not apply to Ireland, as the restraints which were laid on the former, may have been the effects of the prudence, or the jealousy of their brethren of this nation. Acquainted with letters these might certainly

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have

* Thus among others, Diod. Sic. lib. 5, Cæsar, bell. Gall. l. 6, c. 13. Mela, l. 3, c. 12. Diog. Laert. I, §. 3. Ammian. Marcell. 15, §. 9.

have been; and this advantage would be very desirable to them in their historical and genealogical studies, a knowledge of which the constitution of the nation, as well as the general disposition of the people, rendered indispensably necessary. With the obligation of recording the lineage, and the achievements of their respective masters, (for each chieftain had such an attendant) it will not therefore appear surprizing, that they committed to writing, the history of their country, and that their annals should have survived in the compilations of later historians*.

Pursuing their usual line of conduct, our antiquaries have expatiated with rapture on the extent of the attainments of their ancestors in philosophy and literature. As the reader has been already sufficiently initiated into their manner of supporting similar claims, he shall not be troubled with a needless repetition. A single specimen of their pretensions on this subject, will suffice for his purpose.

The author of the "introduction to the history and antiquities of Ireland," after a splendid detail of the discoveries in astronomy, which were known to his ancestors, and after gravely asserting that they were acquainted with the use of Telescopes, produces as a confirmation of this remarkable circumstance, the following event. "Our own history," says he, "comes
 " in as evidence, as our early annals tell us
 " that the son of Milesius first espied the Irish
 " coasts by means of glasses. Maitland with
 " the want of candour peculiar to Caledonian
 " writers (the learned Doctor Robertson only
 " excepted) upbraids Doctor Keating for as-
 " firming that Ith discovered the famous
 " western island by means of a Telescope from
 " the top of the tower of Braganza in Spain:
 " whereas

* See Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*, p. 29, *note*.

“ whereas he asserts on the contrary, that this
 “ pretended discovery was a mere fiction, and
 “ accounts for the early knowledge the Spa-
 “ niards had of Ireland, from a friendly in-
 “ tercourse by means of traffic and alliance.”*

Whether or no I am to be involved in the charge thus preferred against the “Caledonian writers” I know not. But I cannot nevertheless persuade myself to believe (and I strongly suspect there are many in a similar predicament) that the rays of light, or rays flowing from any object move in an oblique instead of a rectilinear direction. To see from Spain the pinnacle, (and no more) of the Mangerton mountains, in the county of Kerry and the nearest to that country, which are upwards of 1000 yards in perpendicular height, would require on the opposite shore, even with the telescope of an Herschel, an eminence of more than ten thousand feet, while the Cantabrian mountains fall far short of that prodigious elevation! Our author must therefore to the disparagement of the credit of the far-famed Virgilius Solivagus, convince us that the earth is a plane; or, which indeed may be more congenial with the spirit of his system, he must look in his antiquated records for some Irish archytas and for evidences which may shew us that the modern discovery of ærestation was long since known among his pagan ancestors.

His other arguments are equally convincing. By means of one of them we find that the use of Telescopes was not unknown among the Greeks and Romans. For assuredly, if the phrase of the Irish bards which gives us to understand that they possessed the means of bringing the heavenly bodies nearer to them—
 carmina

* Introduction p 93.

carmina vel possunt cœlo deducere lunam,—is a proof that these instruments were known among the Irish, the inference is equally valid, with respect to the philosophers of these enlightened nations. The art of poetry was however, that to which these ancient philosophers were indebted, the only method of using this nearer correspondence being through the medium of imagination.

C H A P.

C H A P T E R III.

S E C T I O N II.

THAT Ireland was possessed by a people immersed in barbarism, unrefined and unpolished we have had occasion amply to evince. That even in such unpropitious circumstances, the Irish might not have been altogether strangers to letters, has also been shewn to be by no means so improbable as has been commonly supposed. From whatever quarter was derived the knowledge which was confined to a powerful and independent institution among these islanders, from the same might have been also derived an acquaintance with the elements of science. No reason can be conjectured why the one should be imparted, while the other was withholden; and the different advantages which must have resulted to this ambitious body, from the use of these latter must have interested them far more in their preservation, and must have induced them to cherish this valuable art with far greater attention, than general views of science, in which they were not personally concerned, and which, perhaps, curiosity alone induced them to cultivate.

Though there do not at this late period exist, any literary monuments of these early ages, a circumstance for which, however remarkable
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it may be, it is in our power to account in the clearest and most satisfactory manner, yet should we investigate the subject, barren as it appears, we may, perhaps, succeed in discovering no uncertain evidences in favour of reasoning which carries with it such an air of probability. As an evidence of this kind, the peculiarity in the form of the Irish letters was long considered. The point was however contested, and contested indeed with a success which appears almost unequalled in these antiquarian controversies. It seems finally to be determined that the letters used by the modern Irish, however they may differ from the Roman characters, are those which were also used by the writers of the middle ages, and that they were not peculiar to this nation. The old Irish character must therefore have been superseded through the influence of the Clergy, to whom that used by the Romans would have been more acceptable. But the general use of these foreign elements, is no sufficient proof that characters peculiar to the Irish never existed. There is not at present any copy of the sacred scriptures to be found in the Hebrew letter; and what is still more surprizing, there is none extant in the Chaldee, excepting the word JEHOVAH, which was in Hebrew. Yet Origen mentions his having seen such copies.*

The variation in the powers of the Irish letters, from those of the Romans and the difference with respect to their number have also been considered as proofs that the pagan Irish were in possession of an alphabet peculiar to themselves.

* This applicable circumstance I take upon the authority of Colonel Vallancey (*Vindication*, pref. p. 60) which is, I suppose, sufficiently decisive.

felves. That ſuch arguments ſhould be adduced by writers whoſe acquaintance with foreign antiquities, is generally ſuppoſed to be no leſs intimate than their knowledge of this hiſtory is rather remarkable.* The ſame obſervations which they have made on the Irifh alphabet, are equally to be applied to the alphabets of the northern nations: in ſome inſtances, the caſes are parallel; and in others, which are mentioned, they are exactly the ſame. But the obſervable difference, and that which requires to be noticed, is, that with the one people an alphabet was employed, which being invented for their uſe, was different from the Roman; with the other, the Roman, whether it ſuperſeded the ancient characters, or whether it was the firſt alphabet with which they were made acquainted, was that which was in general uſe. It is therefore to be enquired whether the effects in the latter caſe were the ſame with thoſe produced in the former,—a queſtion this, which an acquaintance with the theory of ſounds as far as it reſpects the formation of letters, will moſt probably decide in the affirmative.

In oppoſition to ſuch arguments, it has been ſaid, that the proper terms in the Irifh tongue, which relate to ſcience and to letters, are only Latin words naturalized; which would not, it is contended, be the caſe, had literature been cultivated by the pagan Irifh. There would then, it is added, be found in their language, words ſynonymous, though underived from foreign ſources.

Perhaps, however, this argument will be found to prove nothing more than the foregoing. The Irifh were, according to the accounts

* See Collect. Vol. II. p. 46.

counts of their antiquaries, unacquainted with parchment or paper, and they wrote what they wished to record, on tables or planes of wood, and in letters engraven with a stile. Slow indeed in such circumstances must have been their progress in literature! But when they changed their clumsy and inconvenient instruments, for others which possessed such superior advantages, it was necessary that they should also adopt the names given to these by the people by whom they were introduced: for it is not to be conjectured that they should transfer to these new improvements, terms expressive of what were of a dissimilar nature. It is therefore easy to account for this seeming inconsistency with the pretensions of the Irish. Yet even in these circumstances we may find that there are terms in their language expressive of some of those instruments which related to letters, for the letters themselves, and for various sciences which were cultivated by their literati.* This therefore is an evidence that letters were not unknown to the pagan Irish; and thus is the objection which is urged to evince the contrary to be changed into an argument, of a tendency directly opposite.

Of the same tendency is also the existence of that mode of stenography, which obtained among the Irish, and which they called *Ogam*. This is an evidence at once simple and entirely conclusive. Without an acquaintance with letters,

* See Dr. Warner's introduction to his history, Vol. I. p. 64. edit. 8 vo.—A letter, *Fiodh*,—a book, *cian*;—science, *ealadha*, *feanachus*;—poesy, *dan*, *duain*;—history, *seachus*;—Philosophy, *filiadh*;—law, *dligeach*, *feanachus*; and as these and other terms of the same kind are only gleaned, as I conjecture, from incidental mention, there must doubtless have been many more which are become obsolete. However these will suffice.

letters, it were impossible to derive methods of using THEM for the purposes of secrecy and dispatch, as ignorance of these would preclude any invention in which they were primarily and of necessity concerned. Of this sort of invention is the Ogam. The learned Pinkerton asserts, that the different kinds of Ogam are mere sorts of short hand writing used in the middle ages. That they were sorts of short hand writing is readily granted. But from the late discovery of an Ogam inscription on a monument written a century and half before the introduction of christianity, it plainly appears that this mode of writing is to be referred to a more early date; and it as evidently appears that letters were known in Ireland at that period. This therefore is an evidence which may be looked upon as irrefragable.*

The deficiency of manuscripts, and other literary monuments of this kind, of these early ages, has often been triumphantly produced as a conclusive argument against the pretensions of the Irish, to an early acquaintance with letters. Yet upon a minute investigation, it will perhaps appear that no such argument can with propriety be urged. For whether we regard the perishable nature of the materials employed to transmit to posterity the relation of past events, and to perpetuate the knowledge of those by whom literature was cultivated, the nature of the information which they comprized, or the numerous and long continued calamities, which from a period so extremely remote, have afflicted this nation, it is scarcely possible that we should possess any of the literary productions of these distant ages. But as
this

* See Note T.

this is a point of some importance, it may be proper to take a nearer view of it, in order to satisfy the numerous questions, and to obviate the many doubts which have been rather encouraged than lessened by the long continued repetition of that self refuted declamation, which has been so unsparingly lavished on this subject.

Of the barbarism of the Irish, and of the little progress which literature could make among a people by whom it was confined to a particular institution, I have had occasion already to make some mention. Those to whom the cultivation of literature was entrusted, cannot be supposed to have been much interested in making new discoveries, and in encreasing the stores of knowledge, of which they were already possessed. Various causes would contribute to repress their efforts, if even they had been so disposed. To grave on their wooden tablets the extended and intricate genealogy of their princes, to celebrate their achievements in war, and their prowess in battle, constituted the principal part of their duty. Science was to be learned from verbal information, rather than from the study of written compositions. Such compositions infer a more assiduous cultivation of literature, as there is no necessity for the multiplication of books on any subject, unless it be minutely investigated by a number of contemporaries, by whom it is regarded in various points of view, and who contribute to the extension of knowledge, by a collation of the different lights which may arise from their particular researches. If therefore there were any treatises on scientific subjects, they must have consisted, not of novel and original sketches of what was to be more completely delineated

ated from the successive discoveries of posterity, but of epitomes and systems of that knowledge, with which they had long been acquainted, and of details of inventions which experience had rendered habitual.—That the number of such treatises could not possibly be considerable, it were almost superfluous to observe.

Upon the introduction of christianity, a new epoch commenced. Though the clergy who superseded the senaches, or who opened to them a more enlarged sphere for their literary labours, did by no means ascend to the summit of excellence, yet are not their attempts to be altogether despised. They had access to the intellectual treasures of Greece and Rome, and they enjoyed various advantages, to which their predecessors were strangers. Such favourable circumstances produced correspondent effects. And we accordingly find, that in these ages, Ireland was the principal asylum of whatever learning was to be found in these parts of Europe, and that it was justly deemed the school of the West.

It was therefore to be expected that the Clergy and the Monks should despise those monuments of barbarous literature, which they derived from the ignorant Senaches, and that they should take very little trouble to preserve, what they thus treated with disregard. Of the small number of these compositions, which might escape the active zeal of the first Christians, by whom as is recorded they were proscribed, still fewer would be transcribed, and the whole of the perishable originals must long since have yielded to the destructive hand of time, or to the devastation of the national enemy. Of those which were transcribed, as well as of the works which were permitted to perish, there
might

might have been introduced into the compilations of these more enlightened writers, such matters as were interesting to the people, notwithstanding the revolution which they had witnessed. Such a claim to their regard would have particularly directed them in their attention to the history of their ancestors. And that these historic records were admitted in this manner, the character justly given to almost all the historians who advert to these early ages, clearly evinces. Their compositions are very injudicious *transcripts*. But when these reliques of druidic knowledge were thus stripped of every thing which rendered them valuable, we may well suppose, that as they would not be estimated so highly as the subsequent productions of superior writers, they would meet with much less care and attention to their preservation. Being thus liable to so many accidents, it is by no means surprizing that they should have disappeared in the general wreck of Irish literature.

To whatever dangers therefore awaited the literary remains of the first ages of Christianity in this nation, those of an earlier date were much more exposed. They were at first proscribed by the early profelytes of Christianity. Those which remained were subjected to the ravages of time, and if any were renewed by transcription, the number thus saved must have been still further reduced below that which had escaped the attacks of religious zeal. These again, from their antiquity, and still further from their consequent depreciation, as they did not embrace modern discoveries and recent events, were more liable to neglect than other works more favourably circumstanced. Such were the disadvantages under which they laboured, besides

sides being obnoxious to the destruction incident to more modern compositions. And thus, if even there were not such a *general* deficiency of Irish literary monuments, might we account for the circumstances of none of these more ancient writings being at this time extant. But when it is remembered that we have not any of these writings of a more early date than the *tenth* century, surely no argument can be hence deduced in disfavour of their pretensions to letters before the *fifth* age.

There are several modern antiquaries, nevertheless, who imagine this general deficiency of the remains of Irish literature of these early periods, to be a matter of much triumph; and accordingly, they testify the pleasure which they receive from this circumstance in the most lively terms. The more recent they can by any means make this date, the greater, in their opinion, is the objection to the authenticity of Irish history, and to the pretensions of the national antiquarians, to an early use of letters among their countrymen. Much has been said of this sort; and it is very observable, that though it has been so frequently urged as a circumstance highly unfavourable to the Hibernian system of antiquities, yet those who contend for it, have, notwithstanding, permitted these objectors to continue their injurious remarks, without any animadversions, as if they were conscious that in this point their system was wholly indefensible.

But let it be asked, whether this very circumstance, so frequently and so triumphantly adverted to by these objectors, does not furnish a most cogent argument in favour of those pretensions which they have been endeavouring to explode; and whether it will not recoil on them
with

with all the force which they wished it should be found to possess. However unexpected this may be, it will be found, nevertheless, to be true.

They must allow that those manuscripts which remain relative to the present subject, are not original works. The book of Lecan, is only a compilation from other materials, whether true or false; and of the other works of this kind now extant, even those of the most early date, the same must be affirmed. They themselves limit the impositions of the monks as they consider them, to the eleventh or twelfth century; and the only book which is extant, that was written before that period, namely, the Psalter of Cashel, was a professed compilation of King Cormac,* by whom it is said the materials were collected. In short, every annalist who treats of these times, of whom we have any remains, is confessedly a transcriber.

Cormac, or whoever in his name was the author of the work just mentioned, complains, that the Irish in his time were very inattentive to their history, and for this he passes on them a merited censure. Yet it is certain that there then existed several historical performances which he made the foundation of his own; because he could not otherwise have attained a knowledge of the events which occurred in the five centuries, which had elapsed from the introduction of Christianity, to the beginning of his reign. Works of this kind must also have been in the hands of the compilers of the annals of Innisfallen, of Ulster, &c. who had to treat of events
to

* By reducing the æra of the compilation of this work, as some would do, this argument is rendered proportionably cogent.

to them still more remote. To have written books which recorded the transactions of their ancestors during six or seven centuries, with that *veracious* dryness for which they are noted by a late antiquary, were evidently impossible, unless these analysts had recourse to the assistance of more early writers; and their compilations evidently point to the existence of such literary materials of former periods, as we have supposed to have been then existing.

Now, if of the books written in the lapse of five centuries, and which it is demonstrated had existence at a later period, we have not at present *any* traces, except in the compilations of those who have since cultivated Irish history, how can it be expected that any productions of ages anterior to these, fewer in number, and exposed to greater danger, should have survived, unless in the same or similar compilations of the same authors? In them, indeed, we have the same traces of these ancient literary monuments. But how absurd is it to expect that the writings of ages so remote should remain, while the destruction of others, posterior to them in time, should be a theme of such triumph and a truth so unsuspectedly enforced?

How unreasonable the observation of these writers, if they actually mean that the Irish history is destitute of authenticity, because the most early record now extant of a people thus ancient, is of so late a date as the tenth age. Those annals which record the history of the nation subsequent to the æra. of Christianity, were not written for several hundred years after that period. All drew from sources different from the writings of historians of the same age; and the information of all is, by every writer of the present time, and even by these

remarkers themselves, considered as legitimate history. Yet, could not one of these writers, without such assistance as is indispensable to every compiler of history, know any thing more of what passed six centuries before them, than could Cormac, who flourished in the tenth, or the writer of the *Liber Lecanus*, who flourished in the fifteenth age of what happened prior to that remote epoch. But these writers, it should seem, measure the comparative authenticity of a history, by the criterion of the age of those by whom it is written; as though the revolutions of the Roman Monarchy were not as accurately and as justly depicted in the masterly work of a Gibbon, as in the pages of the writers of the Augustan history.*

Of this deficiency of early writings on this subject, much has been said, and as these remarkers will not, it is presumed, retract any statement of facts which they formerly made, merely because it may not suit with their emergencies at a subsequent period, every particular which they so triumphantly collected, must serve as a still greater addition to the weight of evidence against themselves. If we possess so few manuscripts written before the *twelfth* century, it is plain, that by adducing this circumstance, they the more clearly ascertain the extent of those disturbances which destroyed every historical record prior to the *tenth*, and which must have been far more effectual in causing to perish every remain of the *fifth* age. And it is evident, that they have in a most satisfactory manner accounted for that unfavourable appearance to which they were obliged to have recourse, as the source of their most weighty objections.

It

* See Note U.

It may not be superfluous to trace as far as in our power, some of those literary remains, the existence of which has long been so strenuously denied. To speak of the great assistance for which the compilers of these more early ages, were indebted to compositions which have since disappeared, is not intended, because we are not made acquainted with the particular materials which they used. I shall mention, however, two instances of collections of Irish manuscripts, which were in existence at a more recent period.

The first is from the information of a gentleman of the last century, who seems to have been a diligent collector of the scattered remains of Irish literature, and who was the proprietor of the manuscripts in the Seabright collection. In one of these manuscripts is found written the following general account of those books of which he was possessed.

“ As for Old Irish manuscripts, I Thady
 “ Roddy of Crossfield, in the county Mayo, and
 “ province of Connaught, Esq. have many Irish
 “ books of philosophy, law, romances, poetry,
 “ genealogies, physic, mathematics, &c. &c. as
 “ ancient as any in Ireland. My honoured
 “ friend, Roger O’Flaherty, lost a curious vo-
 “ lume of mathematics last war, in Galway,
 “ which I lent him. Some of the said books
 “ were written A. C. 15, in the reign of Ferogh
 “ Fiogh Feaghtuagh, who reigned then; some
 “ in the reign of Cairbre Liffeachar, who began
 “ his reign, A. C. 268; some in the reign of
 “ Cormac Mac Art, A. C. 227.

“ As for Walsh manuscripts, I saw none ex-
 “ cept eighteen in my custody, before the war
 “ of 1688, being letters from the kings of Ire-
 “ land,

“ land, to the princes of Wales, and from the
 “ said princes, to our kings and nobility upon
 “ several occasions. I have thirty books of our
 “ law, although my honoured friend, Sir Richard
 “ Cox, was once of opinion, that our law was
 “ arbitrary, and not fixed or written, till I sa-
 “ tisfied him to the contrary in Summer, 1699,
 “ by shewing him some of the law books. We
 “ find some of our laws ordained by Olim
 “ Fadig, or Olam Fodla, who began his reign,
 “ A. M. 3883, before Christ, 1316, according to
 “ our calculation, of 5199 from Adam to Christ;
 “ and so continued and augmented as causes
 “ required in the reigns of the succeeding kings,
 “ to the English invasion, A. C. 1167.”

Some such collection Archdeacon Lynch, in
 his refutation of Cambrensis, mentions his hav-
 ing seen. But such an explicit declaration, so
 completely subversive of all the arguments of
 those writers who oppose the pretensions of the
 Irish on this subject, could not well escape ani-
 madversion. Dr. Leland observes, that though
 Lynch *saw*, and Roddy shewed these books, yet
 neither *professes* to have understood them. This
 is the whole amount of the objections which
 have been urged against a testimony so decisive:
 and how very insufficient this objection, every
 intelligent observer must perceive. He will see,
 that in the total deficiency of conclusive reason-
 ing, and at the same time with the indispensable
 necessity of making some sort of remark on this
 information, no other could be produced than
 a conjecture that is fully done away by the tenor
 of that information itself: he will remark, that
 a simple *profession* of understanding them, could
 scarcely be introduced in the accounts of these
 antiquaries; that were it thus introduced, with-
 out the least necessity, without its being at all
 required

required by the tenor of their remarks, it would appear in some measure, in the shape of ridiculous vanity; and that such an empty, unconcatenated profession, would perhaps argue a suspicion of the validity of their general testimony.

That Lynch understood these books, it is indeed impossible from any direct evidence to ascertain. But, with regard to the information of Roddy, so clear is the proof, as scarcely to admit any shadow of doubt. To suppose, that among a people who dwelt with peculiar pleasure on those tales which related to their ancestors, and among a people in whose language they were written, and by whose literati they were studied, these literary remains should be involved in mystery, were to suppose a circumstance so extraordinary, and in every respect so highly improbable, as not to be admitted without the most decisive evidence. Such we are not to consider the inability of Lloyd to understanding these books. Much less are we to suppose, that *because* they cannot be read by the Irish of the present day, they were equally unknown to their predecessors. That these manuscripts, on account partly of their language, and partly of the manner in which they were written (the *Boustrophedon*) should be unintelligible to a Welch antiquary, is easily conceived. And it is not less easy to suppose that the method of reading such manuscripts, should be lost to the modern Irish, because, the manuscripts themselves either perished, or were sent out of the kingdom.

That Roddy could not possibly acquire a knowledge of the contents of these manuscripts, is therefore not to be supposed; and that he should bestow so much pains in making such a collection

collection as he appears to have done, *without such knowledge* would indeed, be a singular instance of caprice. The presumption then is strong in his favour, even from such a general view of things; but it is converted in some measure to a certainty from his own testimony. He tells us minutely, the subjects of which they treated: he discriminates between those manuscripts which were written in the Irish, and those in the Welch tongue: the number of these, as well as of his collection of books on some particular subjects (of law, for instance) he particularly mentions: nay he goes so far as expressly to affix the respective periods when they were written to *some* of the *more* ancient. Do these particulars, and the general air of the whole, argue an ignorance of the contents of these books? Was it possible to attain a knowledge even of the subjects on which they were written, much less of their comparative antiquity, without such a knowledge? Can it be supposed, that a man entirely ignorant of such studies, would be capable of entering into such discriminative descriptions, or such a detail of particulars? and do not these discriminative accounts, and these various details, obviously infer an acquaintance with those contents, whence alone a knowledge of them was to be extracted.*

There are who immediately reject every argument, however, conclusive, and even, as in the present instance) every fact which has been so unfortunate as to have incurred the most trivial and unmeaning animadversion from a writer interested in its discredit, or a writer of different general sentiments. To such the present evidence

* See Note V.

evidence will therefore be wholly unsatisfactory. But the insufficiency of which they will complain, must certainly be done away by another fact, which has been so happy as to have escaped without a similar depreciation. I allude to the collection of the celebrated Duaid Mac Firbís, who was a member of a family, in which, we are told, the study of antiquities was hereditary. HE therefore must most certainly have been acquainted with the contents of what he possessed in this line, as to this favourable circumstance, he enjoined a particular attachment to that study. And *he* writes to Lynch, the author of *Cambrensis Eversus*, informing him of some of those books in his possession, from the catalogue of which, still preserved, it appears that he had several tracts written before the æra of the introduction of Christianity, the dates of which he mentions respectively. As his testimony therefore has not been in the smallest degree invalidated, it follows, that the knowledge of letters among the Irish, prior to that epoch, is decisively evinced. The collection of this antiquary, it is probable, shared the same tragical fate with their possessor, who fell a victim to the tumults by which this island so long continued to be harraßed.

To the operation of such causes long continued, is owen the present deficiency of Irish manuscripts. The ravages of the Danes, succeeded those which had been begun by the Christian clergy, by whom every remain of Druidism had been proscribed. But the work of destruction seems to have been effectually prosecuted by the English, who, during four centuries, fully compleated the plan of extirpation. Within this period, Ireland exhibited for the most part, a shocking scene of rapine and
disolation,

disolation, as here were conjoined the various species of intestine and civil commotion. Had these tumults continued for the space of but a few years, yet even in such a short time, while destruction and conflagration every where prevailed, and while there was no security of property, and the attention was solely directed to the affairs of the present juncture, the consequences must have been terrible. But when we extend our view to the successive ages, in which these, and the whole train of similar evils were prevalent, we want words fully to express the varied extent of the mischiefs with which they must have been inevitably attended. What was spared by the first inroads, was equally endangered by successive invasions; and indeed so extensive were the effects of this continuance of national commotion, that at one period they partly gave rise to a most iniquitous inquiry into the titles by which landed property was possessed. In this court, “ whose decisions were
“ so unjust (to use the words of a liberal writer), that neither the laws of nature, nor of
“ custom, nor even possession for centuries,
“ could preserve to Roman Catholics, the estates
“ of their ancestors, prescription became of no
“ use, and the oldest tenures were in the great-
“ est danger from the ruins of time, or the in-
“ juries of accident: even the new might have
“ perished in such a series of war and confu-
“ sion, where private houses and public offices
“ were every day plundered and in flames.”—
And when even the deeds, by which men held their property, were thus subject to destruction, and this destruction so very extensive, is it to be expected that the works of old annalists, and the dry remains of the literature of a barbarous age, should be in any greater security?

But

But there is room for further observation on this subject. Had the English when they thus persecuted the natives and were continually impelling them to acts of desperation, attended to their literature, and endeavoured to preserve those remains of the science of former ages, which still survived, we might even now be possessed of many works, which are irrecoverably lost. But such conduct was not to be expected from men of this disposition; and even where it might be looked for, it was overruled by the dictates of a cool and insidious policy; a policy which was extended as well to this nation as to others, where our ancestors endeavoured to establish their dominion. The conduct of Edward the first in Wales and in Scotland is well known. In Ireland a similar disposition gave rise to similar detestable maxims; but here as the struggles between the adverse parties were so long protracted, there was more room for the completion of the scheme. It was till the time of James the first, an object of Government to discover and to destroy every literary remain of the Irish, in order the more fully to eradicate from their minds every trace of their ancient independence. Sir George Carew, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, though himself a scholar, has been accused by the author of the *Analect*, among other outrages of this kind, of bribing the family historian of the Mac Carthies, to convey to him some curious manuscripts. “But what,” adds this author, “the president Carew did in one province (Munster, Henry Sidney, and his predecessors, did all over the kingdom, being charged to collect all the manuscripts they could, that they might effectually destroy every vestige of letters and antiquity throughout the kingdom.”

Of

Of the extent of the ravages of the Danes, we may, from the conduct of the English court, form some idea. Doctor Warner, in order to procure every assistance in compiling his history of Ireland, caused application to be made to the court of Copenhagen, to inquire for Irish manuscripts, scattered in the royal libraries. Upon a close search, however, none could be found; and this writer, accordingly, supposes that the Danes, instead of transmitting them to their native settlements, destroyed whatever manuscripts they could find. But though this conjecture is plausible, it does not appear to be entirely just. The king of Denmark, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, made application to the English court, for proper persons, who might explain the ancient Irish books in his possession; and an Irishman, at that time in prison in London, was in consequence, treated with on the subject, and was ready to engage in the work. But, says the author of the work above quoted, upon a council being called, a certain member, *whom it is not necessary* to name, opposed the scheme, lest it might be prejudicial to the English interest. This single fact is in itself sufficient to shew the nature and the extent of the causes which have contributed to the general wreck of Irish literature, as well of modern, as of more ancient ages; and were we in possession of no further evidence on the subject, it would fully suffice for answering every objection, and every doubt to which such a deficiency must naturally give rise.*

It would appear strange, were a modern historian to question whether the Scots had the use of letters before the æra of Edward the first of England,

* See also O'Halloran's Introduction, p. 95,—98.

England, merely because the writings which they once possessed, are not at present to be seen. To such an observation an antiquary of that nation would pay little regard, as he learns from history, that these writings were removed or destroyed by the English monarch in the course of his transitory domination. And yet will this very antiquary refuse credit to the pretensions of another nation, in which almost every possible circumstance has combined for the completion of the destruction of the remains of its ancient literature. The Scottish archives and historical records were certainly in existence, because they were afterwards seized and carried off by the national enemy; and we have uncontroverted evidence, that there were also literary reliques of this nation, of the description to which we allude. The same policy dictated the means which were used for the suppression of both. But though the means which were employed in this nation, were of necessity from the state of affairs, and from a peculiarity of circumstances, far more effectual in their operation than those which we used in the former, yet such is the inconsistency, or at the least, such the inadvertence of these writers, that they persist in urging, as unfavourable to the credit of Irish history, a circumstance, which when applied to the Scottish, they would deem unworthy of notice.

CHAPTER IV.

TRUTH and fiction are so very dissimilar, and it is so very difficult to clothe the one in the dress of the other, that from but a moderate degree of sagacity and attention, it is scarcely possible to conceal the marks of the deception. With this view to make some remarks on the history of Ireland, as far as it relates to the period under consideration, will not therefore be superfluous, as we may hence deduce such observations as may have a tendency to give some elucidation to this obscure subject.

That these annals should be viewed in different lights, according to the different systems of those by whom they have been considered, is natural, and is indeed the case. By those antiquarians who have endeavoured to realize the splendid fabric of fiction, these historical records have been recommended to the world by a display of every estimable quality in the composition of history: while writers who disregarded these strained pretensions, bestow on them every epithet which can be dictated by a conviction of their real insignificance, augmented by that prepossession and prejudice which would uniformly oppose every mark of literary refinement among this people in their ancient state.

It

It must be confessed, that the character which more justly belongs to these annals, so far as refers to the value which should be set upon them as historical compositions, in a great measure justifies the neglect with which they have been treated by these writers. The song of the bard, while it partakes of the barbarism of the people among whom it was composed, and of those showy ornaments which are bestowed upon it by fiction, the general concomitant of verse, displays not any of those attractions which render history a study not less pleasing than instructive. It exhibits no consecutive series of national events, no secret motives to the actions which it records, no variety and nice discrimination of character, no diversification of the uniform and barbarous scene: All wears the same dull and gloomy appearance, while the history extends only to the irruption of a tumultuous tributary, the assassination of a christian, the rape of a queen, the battle in which the monarch is slain. It is in fact but a copious genealogy, in which the order of descent in a family, and the principal events in an obscure reign are delineated, without any attempt at ornament in composition, or elegance in adjustment.

But should we consider the circumstances in which these historical tracts were originally composed, it will perhaps evidently appear, that these unfavourable peculiarities, are rather characteristic of their authenticity, than evidences of a deception. Like a mirror, they reflect the state of civilization among these islanders, and through the just medium of their own description, we may contemplate various circumstances indicative of their real disposition and manners. It may indeed be observed, that the
attack

attack upon the credit of this history, appears to be almost solely in consequence of the natural inference, that the Irish could not have such accounts of their national transactions, without that acquaintance with letters, which by objectors is denied them. Even with this indispensable obligation of impugning the authenticity of this history, they cannot deny to it the claim of being a natural and faithful delineation of barbarism. According to Dr. Campbell, a picture of the tenth century, (in which period, he says, the oldest of the national historians flourished) “ with altered names under it, “ is foisted upon us as a representation of all “ that go before. The same may be said, with “ due allowance, of the productions of much “ later periods. The artless authors have wrote “ rather what they saw and felt, than what “ they heard and read. Whilst they vary a few “ unimportant circumstances of what they would “ put off as history, they betray their own sentiments and opinions; and when they talk of “ old times, give an exact copy of modern “ manners.”* Thus that argument which is generally used as the just criterion of history, and as accurately discriminative between truth and fiction, is here at first given up; and we are at once presented with a long series of fables, exactly copied from nature. The æra at which this rare copy was made, is the point, and the *single* point which constitutes the whole difference of opinion with respect to this history, and which has been the cause of the aspersions on its credit. This acute writer is of opinion, that from the national unacquaintance with letters, the copyists must have existed at a
later

* *Strictures*. p. 15.

later period; and no other circumstance could excuse the unauthorized assertion, by which he brings them down to a particular period. If we take away the ground upon which he is reduced to stand, we at once take away the objections which he has in his power to urge in disfavour of this history. Its general tenor is a copy not only of the tenth and the succeeding ages, but also of those times which preceded that period. The uniformity and general level of the Irish national character, were not in any considerable degree disturbed by the intervention of such circumstances as could be attended with this striking effect; or if any such circumstances there were, they were but too much counteracted by others of a contrary tendency. A modern antiquary therefore, is not far from the truth in observing, that the history of one age, gives a tolerable picture to all the rest. Whatever peculiarities the ingenuity of our author may discover, (if indeed he can discover any sufficiently appropriate) as referring to the period which he has thought proper to state, may be naturally, and with propriety traced to those writers, by whom these early annals were *compiled*, not to fabulists of the same age, by whom, it is asserted, they were *originally* composed.

In making these observations on the credit which is due to the history of Ireland, as far as its authenticity is concerned, it is to be understood, that they refer more particularly to that part of it which relates to periods subsequent to the establishment of the colony by which letters were introduced. An investigation of the origin of this colony has been already attempted. And from what was then observed on the peculiar circumstances of their migration, it is easy to conceive, that it opens a most extensive field
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for the disfiguring interpolations of fancy and error. Under the pressure of accumulated fictions,—fictions, which may be traced as well to nations of the same stock, though settled in different countries, as to the Irish, and which are to be referred to the more early, as well as to recent periods in their national history,—the accounts of their real transactions are scarcely discernable, and are to be distinctly learned from other sources of information, which must be collected by the historic inquirer.

National tradition, however true, and sometimes, perhaps, even national records may prove fallacious guides to the historian. A single tribe will arrogate to itself those actions which are common to a whole nation, and will consider as their own, the history of a people at large. Proofs of this we may collect from the vague traditions of barbarous nations, which though they may be strictly true, will easily mislead, unless attention be paid to this material circumstance. Such, in some measure, appears to be the case with Ireland, as her historians ascribe to her, various events which are to be referred to a different country, and to the Irish, transactions common to these colonists with other nations. This circumstance, by giving such scope to the researches of the critic in his endeavours to ascertain what he should have found determined with accuracy, must certainly be considered as one of the various imperfections, by which this history is, as a history, so greatly deprecated. But it cannot be used as an argument in disfavour of the authenticity of its general outline. The accounts which have been preserved of these early ages, have been lately collated with the history of other nations, with whom these colonists were connected; and

and whatever room there may be in too many instances for the sneer even of the unprejudiced, and the peremptory assertion of the opponents of these records, in their disfavour, yet it must be allowed, that in not a few points, they exhibit a conformity remarkably striking and particular.* It is much to be wished, that this parallel were compressed within narrower limits, and that the extraneous and irrelevant matter were rejected, so that the resemblance being brought into a stronger, and at the same time a more just point of view, might strike with the proper force, and might be adverted to with more propriety in accurate disquisition. To trace the various connections of a nation from those documents which have survived in such a manner as is here desirable, is, however, a business of much delicacy, and much more difficult than the more simple affair of what Spenser calls, ripping up its pedigree. The peculiarity of such an operation, is too obvious to require a minute detail of the various difficulties with which the critic must necessarily struggle; and indeed, it were to be regretted, that the abilities of a critic qualified for the arduous task, should be spent in unprofitable labours, requisite even in such an inferior sphere.

But if the Irish had traditions and fables in common with other nations, they had also others peculiar to themselves. Various circumstances, as well those which regarded the nature of the history, as others which affected their own dispositions incited them to fill up the long intervals of time which they observed in these annals, with fictitious and extravagant details. Among other instances of a departure from that

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fidelity

* See note X.

fidelity so indispensable to history, must be instanced the mention of such personages as are only found recorded in the sacred writings, whose names, nevertheless, we find introduced in these annals. This is a circumstance which could not escape the attention of even the most indifferent observers, and it has accordingly afforded ample room for the ridicule and reprehension of some writers, whose conduct is indeed fully justified by the preposterate conduct of Irish antiquaries. These strenuously contend for the credit of their historians, in such instances, as well as for their general authenticity. No sensible reader would excuse an attempt to refute such absurd figments; and indeed, reasoning seems almost inadequate to the task of reclaiming those by whom such pretensions are maintained.

For the appearance of these fabulous circumstances, we may however easily account. These colonists, it has been observed, were derived from a people whose original residence was not far removed from the scene of these events related in the sacred writings; and the early Irish ecclesiastics, perceiving the connexion which might be traced between their own history and that of the Oriental nations, might be easily induced to profit by a circumstance so favourable to their interest. Hence then these stories of the intimacy which subsisted between their ancestors, and the personages distinguished in that book in which their own commission was contained: And it is easy to conceive, that this body might, without meeting much obstacle, succeed in the easy attempt of persuading their ignorant converts to believe the truth of every interpolation of this sort, which in such favourable circumstances they might be disposed to

to introduce. Their influence in subsequent ages, and the advantages which rendered them so superior to the rest of the people, would give to these corruptions, that sanction which genuine history alone should claim, and would continue to maintain their authenticity unquestioned. It is evident, therefore, that this circumstance cannot be assumed as a proof that the whole of the Irish history is equally fictitious. And they who insist that it must involve the whole in the same imputation, should also prove, that the insertion of these manifest and glaring interpolations, could not possibly have been effected, even in such circumstances as would so highly favour their scheme; and they should also give us some reason to suspect, that such cogent reasons as must naturally have influenced the conduct of this body, were not sufficiently powerful to induce them to have recourse to such an imposition.

Every history is liable to corruption; and in ages so ignorant, while that of this island was, in a great measure, at the discretion of every idle senachy and monk, who were so much at liberty to abuse it as their fancy directed, and whose inclination disposed them to make use of such a permission, it is scarcely to be supposed that it could escape uncontaminated by their interpolations. To introduce such corruptions, it is likewise to be remembered, was a task far less difficult than that of the creation of a new series of annals, without any pretension to authenticity: And it may be farther observed, that a much greater portion of national credulity would be requisite for giving the sanction of universal concurrence to these, than in obtaining credit for the former would be necessary.

fary. Now, it were unreasonable, because this history has been thus corrupted, that we should on that account reject the whole as being equally fictitious. And from these observations, it is obvious, that unless the whole is evinced to be equally liable to similar objections, it should rather be allowed, that these manifest interpolations, which indeed every where betray themselves, are to be referred to a more impure source, and that they are the mere corruptions of later writers, to whom the business was natural, and who doubtless were ready to execute any project so level with their capacities.

The history of those events which occurred subsequent to the settlement of these colonists in Ireland, will require more attention than the former, as it not only possesses the same claim to attention, but is found to retain more incontestible and decisive evidences in favour of its authenticity. To some of the objections which have been made against the former, and which respect rather its value as a history, than militate against its general authenticity, this also is liable; but these are less considerable, and the character which it has extorted, even from those who deny it to be genuine, amply compensates for these unworthy interpolations.

It may, perhaps, be superfluous to remark, that even in the best authenticated histories, not a few instances occur which give scope for more critical remark and investigation, on account of the difficulty of rendering particular passages, consistent or reconcileable with others. Here likewise will be found room for similar exertions of judicious criticism, of the same industry and attentive examination. But when we advert to the disadvantages under which this history appears, to the character of the original annalists;

annalists; to the unavoidable omission of many facts and circumstances, which would be requisite for attaining a just view of these periods; to the long series of ages which have since elapsed; and to the inaccuracy, the ignorance, and the errors of successive compilers, from whom we are to derive all our information; it is evident that we must be prepared to meet with many apparent inconsistencies, which no sagacity can reconcile, and with many events, for which in the natural course of affairs, for want of being acquainted with the various steps, by which they were gradually produced, no conjecture can account. To what extent these ambiguities, or these inconsistencies may prevail, we have very little direct information: they are to be discovered only by the repeated perusal, the assiduous, and unbiassed study of the history itself, without any predetermined design of detecting latent difficulties, and without the professed intention of spying out every description which may serve as an inlet for contradiction, and which, by some means, may be deemed of service in enabling the remarker to convert every doubt which he may think proper to raise, into an undoubted proof of its falsity. Such a mode of studying history, would reject as spurious, every thing which has ever appeared of that kind, however simple and precise, and by whomever it may have been written. On the contrary, an unbiassed and assiduous research, with the design of bringing forward no circumstance as doubtful or ambiguous, unless it is in reality such, and with a steady purpose of elucidating every thing of this nature, as far as the subject will admit, even such a research will in every history be embarrassed with but too many uncertainties and contradictions. By those writers

ters who support the credit of the Irish annals, as well as by their opponents who deny their authenticity, this subject has been hitherto almost wholly neglected. The one party extends its concern principally to the general aspect of the whole, and deals so much in loose and vague commendations of its superior excellency, that from them little of this sort is to be expected; the other denying it to be genuine, *because* it opposes their scheme of the introduction of letters into this nation, and perhaps for this reason alone, will not incline to examine into a series of annals, to which they have such a fixed objection. Whenever this history shall be thus studied, if ever it should be deemed worthy of such minute investigation, it will be necessary for those who may undertake the task, to remember that such obscurities as those which have been noted, they must be prepared to encounter. Whether the history be authentic or spurious, these ambiguities must be presumed to adhere to it, because from the disadvantages under which it has laboured, it could scarcely escape them. The criterion of its authenticity will not be the various doubts, which from our ignorance, from the inaccuracy, and the errors almost unavoidably incident to a collection of imperfect fragments and compilations, and from the total want of original documents, we may expect to arise. These must *necessarily* embarrass such a subject. But there will still remain ample evidence of a different nature, from which to determine concerning the question of its being really genuine, or a frivolous and idle fabrication.

The charge of deception seems to be the band of connexion by which all those who oppose the credit of Irish history, are united, however that charge

charge may remain unsupported, or however discordant in other respects they may be by whom it is urged. As soon as they descend to particulars, and venture to specify the æra at which this curious forgery was promulgated, they immediately begin to manifest that dissimilarity of opinion, that contrariety of sentiments, which is the certain concomitant of error. Of this remarkable circumstance, we shall be amply convinced, when we find that they do not agree even with respect to the authors of the deception. By some it has been asserted that the monks, by others that the bards were the prime movers of the bold imposition. Some imagine that the fifth century was the æra at which the traditions of the Irish were originally formed, or that they were at that period moulded into the historical form. Others, supposing with some reason, that the clergy of these days were too much immersed in affairs of a more serious nature, extend this epoch to the sixth or seventh: Others again, and perhaps the very same who had before, or in a different passage made mention of the fifth, descend to the ninth and tenth; and there are who insinuate that the imposition was not perfected till the fourteenth age. Such is the opening of the charge. And an incident so remarkable, will effectually prove that this history has suffered a most flagrant neglect of that investigation which should obviously have been extended to it; and that all that has been said on the subject, must be referred rather to declamation, than to accurate and critical enquiry. In fact, I am in the present instance to seek for such arguments as these writers should have themselves advanced, and to collect whatever remarks might be urged as objections, ~~from the torrent of decla-~~
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mation which they have used as a disguise for their palpable negligence of entering into the requisite disquisitions. And it may with truth be asserted, that this history has met with such treatment, almost solely because it was supposed to be required by the system of general opposition to the fictions and exaggerations of Hibernian writers, and that it has been thus depreciated without any justness of discrimination, or any pains to separate from that which has every characteristic of truth, the “*purpureus latê qui splendeat pannus unus et alter*,” which are with very little nicety *patched* on it, and which they would willingly confound with the other, without any distinction.

To animadvert on each of the various conjectural assertions which are thus advanced in such profusion, were entirely superfluous, when the point in dispute can be ascertained by a simple appeal to acknowledged facts. It may therefore only be observed, that in the *eighth* century lived a Culdee, who makes mention of “*Heremon primus Scotorum et Heber* ;” that in the same age lived Sedulius secundus, who wrote a treatise concerning “*Concordantia Hispaniæ et Hiberniæ* ;” and that in the *sixth*, flourished a St. Coemgen, or Keiven*, who was the writer of a treatise on the origin of the Britons, and of *Heber and Heremon*. Now, though the fifth century was that in which Christianity was introduced, yet the sixth was the beginning of the learned age of Ireland: and it hence appears, that the present ground work, at least, of Irish antiquities, was one of the first subjects which engaged the attention of the Christian literati,

* See Note Y.

ti, and that it may be traced to the earliest periods of their celebrity.

After these decisive evidences, which will supersede the necessity of a more extended detail, it were perhaps superfluous to notice the testimony of Nennius, who wrote towards the beginning of the seventh century, did it not afford a proper specimen of the negligence of research, and the futility of the assertions of some writers on this subject. His evidence, it is said, tends to prove, that at that period the history had not assumed the form in which it now appears. With what propriety this opinion is adopted, the observation of the learned Pinkerton, by whom this part of our antiquities has been *inspected*, will amply evince.* Nennius, he remarks, “only mentions *Miles quidam Hispanus* ;” whence he contends, that this writer knew nothing of the celebrated name, Milesius;† and that later Irish annalists from this word *miles*, formed that proper appellative. The argument is, no doubt, curious. It is however to be wished, that in framing it, he had not forgotten his “utter” detestation of etymology, and of the practice of identifying things the most different, merely because of an accidental resemblance of sound in their name; and it were equally desirable, had he remembered that the Roman language was not that currently spoken in Ireland. The affair, however, is somewhat more serious; for if for what was certainly a far less important deviation from that scrupulous adherence to the *words*, and consequently to the *spirit* of a quotation, he thought proper to brand another writer with the crime of literary perversion,§ the charge is not less justly to be retorted on himself.

Nennius

* Vol. II. p. 6.

† See Note Z.

§ Dissert. p. 93.

Nennius "uses no such expression" as "Miles Hispanus," a *Spanish soldier*. He says that venerunt "tres filii cujusdam Militis Hispaniæ:" an expression which cannot be supposed to mean what is conveyed by the words ascribed to him, because the terms in which it is expressed, "a soldier of Spain," are not at all proper, or in use to denote a common military man of a particular country. This appellation indeed is the proper name of this personage, according to modern Irish writers, as well as according to those from whom Nennius derived his information; the termination which is more commonly subjoined to it, being similar to those by which the names of the French and German commentators of the last and preceding ages, were most commonly disfigured or disguised.

Having thus far traced the æra of this forgery, and having from those imperfect materials which we now possess, brought it so high as the first age of Christian literature, it remains to decide, whether the Monks or the Senachies, were they by whom it was promulgated, or whether it was possible that it could have been effected by either.

That these annals were not, in all probability, composed with a view to deceive, we may collect from a slight inspection. To equal the splendid and lofty descriptions of these early ages, it were requisite that the history should be so framed as to correspond with these fabulous scenes of national felicity. But the fact is, that these annals, these "tales of the deeds of days of other years," present an appearance the very reverse, being a most dull work, narrating almost

most incessant commotions and scenes of destruction, and recording the violent death of seven eights of the sovereigns whom they represent to have reigned. Even the very fables by which it is disgraced, are in some measure a proof that the more ancient history was written by Pagans, and that the later was the work of Christian annalists, the miracles and the prodigies related by both being of a very different nature, and the compilers who lived in the darkest ages, and through the medium of whom all our knowledge is derived, not having sufficient judgment to reject either the incantations of the Druids, or the wonderful effects of the prayers of the Clergy.*

But to proceed to more decisive and summary evidences, to proofs which will require no appeal to the capricious standard of opinion, let us inquire whether this history be of such a nature as it was *possible*, should be forged either by the Monks or the Senachies. Now in this, all agree that it is a mere geneology; and hence, it is certain that such a history would be the most unlikely to be formed, even by the most skilful impostors. But as the fulness of the proof depends in a great measure on the *consistency* of such a history, let us inquire how far this is here to be found, and from the character given of these annals, by a writer, who it is presumed, will not be accused of any violent prejudice, or any improper bias in his opinion on this subject, this point will be sufficiently ascertained.

“ I shall not here enter into a discussion concerning the most ancient and authentic annals of Ireland, said to have been framed
“ under

* See Warner's Hist. Vol. I. p. 280.

“ under the sanction of public authority, from
“ time to time, till the invasion of the Danes.
“ Those valuable monuments have perished long
“ since; but as I before observed, even in those
“ more recent compilations which now remain,
“ we find none of those palpable contradic-
“ tions in different historians, none of those
“ uncertainties in the names and order of their
“ kings, which appear in the histories of darker
“ ages in other nations, where fiction, or *tradi-*
“ *tion* has supplied the want of authentic mate-
“ rials. A general agreement appears in the
“ names and lineage of that long series of
“ princes that succeeded and descended from
“ the first conqueror; and the descent of the
“ collateral branches is traced up to the royal
“ stem, with such precision and consistency, as
“ shews it to have been once a matter of pub-
“ lic concern. The later bards and senachies,
“ could not have fabricated *tables* that should
“ have stood the test of critical examination
“ as these will do; from whence I infer, that
“ they are a true transcript from ancient re-
“ cords then extant, but since destroyed.—The
“ Irish *genealogical tables*, which are still extant,”
(says the same respectable writer), “ carry in-
“ trinsic proofs of their being genuine and au-
“ thentic, by their chronological accuracy and
“ consistency with each other, through all the
“ lines collateral as well as direct; a consis-
“ tency not to be accounted for on the supposition
“ of their being fabricated in a subsequent age
“ of darkness and ignorance, but easily explain-
“ ed if we admit them to have been drawn
“ from the source of real family records and
“ truth. So much of the Irish history as re-
“ lates to the names and succession of their
“ princes, will certainly stand against every
“ reasonable

“ reasonable objection to its credibility, what-
 “ ever suspicion of error, or even fiction, may
 “ be against other circumstances contained in
 “ it.”*

Now, from this account, which though but partially just, will suffice for our purpose, the present question will admit of a most summary and incontrovertible decision. That the bards were not the authors of such an imposition, is certain, because such a task would be entirely abhorrent from their disposition and manner. If it was committed by the Monks, it was promulgated at once, or it received successive and additional increase, before its present appearance was assumed. It were impossible for any man to frame such a set of genealogical tables, for such an extensive series of generations, and to have preserved in it that consistency, the want of which in such a work would be immediately observable, and would give it an appearance totally different. It were impossible that men in the situation in which these Monks were so unfavourably circumstanced, should carry this consistency into the various and different ramifications of collateral descent, and that they should weave the whole into the just form of annals. And that these tables should be fabricated by impostors of different ages, were equally impossible, as in that case the form of systematic regularity, on which such genealogical details must obviously be constructed, could not be pursued or preserved.

The manner in which the series of monarchs was preserved in nations where letters were unknown, by means of the Bards and Scalds, is sufficiently

* Irish Academy's Transact. Vol. I. p. 27. *Antiq.*

ently understood. Their dry and concise catalogues, contained however little more than mere collections of names, and were not designed to comprise much historic information on subjects of a different nature. In Ireland, the genealogies which are preserved, could not have been handed down in such an extensive, and at the same time in so correct a manner, without this acquaintance with letters, as the tables embrace too great a compass to retain them in the memory, and as without the assistance of these elements of knowledge, there would have been no sufficient inducement to bestow on them such peculiar attention. This observation is more particularly applicable to the details of the various events which occurred, and which could not possibly be preserved from oblivion, without the advantage of a similar medium. To separate the one from the other, were an unwarrantable attempt, as the actions attributed to each prince, and the different occurrences which marked his reign, are so properly adapted to the different names, and are so clearly incorporated in an uniform system, that either these must be allowed to be true, or the whole genealogy and events must be rejected as false. And who, it may be demanded, would collect various and extensive registers of family descent, without attending to those events by which the lives of those whom they commemorated, were distinguished? And who could have been the means of performing the one, without having also the means of accomplishing the other? The antiquary may *assert* with as much confidence, as he can summon to his assistance (and *some* there are, who as they do not scruple to cause others to speak according to their wishes, will not make any great efforts in taking the same liberty

liberty with themselves) that the whole is a forgery, that the genealogy is an evident fabrication, and that the details by which it is accompanied, but confirm the truth of his *asseverations*. It is however, in the power of every man to hazard whatever assertions he may chuse; and if this only be required as evidence in historical disquisition, the critic may, at his pleasure, transmute the most authentic record into palpable impositions. But if these disputants will not vouchsafe to give to their positions some further addition of support, by solid and convincing argument, they ought not be displeased with others who may be inclined to credit it as history, what they have not thought proper directly to impugn, except through the channel of capricious and unsupported assertion.

The whole of what regards these details, may therefore be expressed in a short compass. In forming genealogical and family records, it was natural that such details should be introduced; and they are so intimately connected with these extensive catalogues, and their consistency with nature is so *generally* acknowledged, that they merit to be considered as those details, the introduction of which was to be expected. They now form a series of annals, on the authenticity of which, when stripped of the marvellous and the fabulous, with which the original writers, as well as the subsequent compilers, were ever ready to clothe them, we are to decide. They could not be a deception as far as respects the order of descent and succession; because the nature of such an imposition, evidently proves that it was the most unlikely to have been adopted, and because it was by far the most difficult in the execution. The intrinsic marks of authenticity, with respect to these lists, as well

well as the obvious impossibility of their being fabricated, merely by the assistance of imagination, is also to be extended as an evidence in favour of the simple and natural incidents with which they are incorporated. And to disprove these facts were clearly impossible, as there is no basis on which to found the requisite objections to their authenticity.

But that these details are to be allowed as genuine history, we have ample evidence from a late discovery to presume. The discovery to which I allude, is that of the Ogam inscription on the monument of Conan, which, as it ascertains the reality of the battle of Gabhra, a leading stroke in the Irish politics, gives scope for the most decisive inference in favour of the other various relations of events, which are similar to this, or with which it is connected.* Hence then the history of the Pagan Irish is not to be regarded as an imposition of ignorant and uninformed Monks, or as the fabrication of Senachies, still more inadequate to the task, but is with the exceptions which have already been made, to be estimated in the light of genuine national records.

In fact, these annals are not very different from those which treat of periods subsequent to the fifth century, and the reign of Leogaire. Let any one take the trouble of running a parallel between these and the history which treats of the more early periods, and upon making those allowances which are required by the superior antiquity of the latter, and the more ample scope which it afforded for the corruption and interpolations of those writers, in whose successive compilations it has been preserved, he will find the same dry and dull appearance, the same turn for genealogy, the description of
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* See Note T.

similar events, and the delineation of the corresponding effects arising from similar circumstances. Were the history of these more recent ages to be given, with the requisite alterations, as that of the earlier periods, it is very probable that it would incur a similar opposition to its authenticity, and that, *because such an history could not be preserved without an acquaintance with letters*, the historian would be considered as an impostor. In the mean while it is not considered that the existence of this history is a standing evidence, that letters were not unknown prior to the æra, which these writers, who are unwilling to examine the converse of the inference on which they depend, have affixed for their introduction.†

Thus much may be said in defence of a history which has been so often rejected as spurious, and which appears to have been thus rejected and thus treated as a deception, merely to complete the triumph over those antiquaries, by whom its authenticity has been asserted in connexion with a system of which many of the parts are so much less defensible. In the present age, indeed, their ridiculous pretences which have so disgusted every impartial observer, have been rejected with the proper candor, by the more enlightened antiquarians, by whom however, the general outlines are retained.* It is much to be wished that this concession had long since been made, and that instead of losing the reality, by grasping at these unsubstantial shadows, they had not incurred such well merited censure for supporting the absurd and unmeaning figments, which disgrace the national history. So gross, indeed, are these cor-
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ruptions,

† See Note AA.

* See Pref. to Ogygia vindicated, p. 29.

ruptions, that they may be easily distinguished, and may as easily be separated from the annals on which they are engrafted. When we find alphabets invented for nations in ages long anterior to the periods when these nations were formed; when we contemplate the first of the Cæsar's transmuted into the niece of the patriarch Noah; when Moses is brought forward as the instrument by which Ireland has been freed from the inconvenience of venomous reptiles; when we see the origin the Irish exactly traced through the regular gradations of scripture chronology; when we find a view of different Pagan worthies of this nation, intimately connected with various personages of the family of Abraham; when we are entertained with incidents of such a nature as the adventures of Partholanus, and the disasters which befel his successors in their various migrations; we immediately perceive the hand of the interpolating senachy or monk, who thus disfigures the meagre history. Of this sort, too many instances will be found, and in the injudicious compilations, or rather in the imperfect transcripts from more ancient historians, we will be equally surprized with the wonderful effects of a druidic incantation, and with the potent virtue which attended a monkish prayer. But while to those who contemplate this history, these absurdities instantly betray themselves, the more simple parts, and those which partake of the nature of unanimate and unadorned narrations or notices of natural and probable facts, and of such events as are to be expected to occur in similar circumstances, will afford clear evidence that it was entirely out of the power of unskilful fabulists, to form them into such a singular series, and to give them such a coincidence with truth: They

They will find the interpolations and the corruptions to which these annals were so peculiarly subjected to shine conspicuous, while the ground work unincumbered with such uninviting ornaments, remains sure, and without any dread from the inspection of that criticism, which even in all these unfavourable circumstances, it has upon different occasions, been sufficiently powerful, in some measure, to secure in its favour.*

With respect to the chronology of this history, it were superfluous to make any remark on the distinction between genealogical chronology, and that chronology by which history is regulated, and without which it must be in a state of confusion. Of the latter then is here a great deficiency. Perhaps, however, this remarkable deficiency, while the due consistency is preserved in the other more important instances, might be adduced as a further evidence in favour of the authenticity of the history; because, were it an imposition, it is with all appearance of probability to be inferred, that the reverse would be very observable. And indeed the more systematic form, which it is probable such a fiction would have assumed, would have been in some degree requisite from the nature of the interpolations with which the introductory narratives are corrupted.

It were an easy matter to reduce the boasted antiquity of the Irish, by means of the technical chronology, which when more regular means of ascertaining the various epochs of a history are deficient, is generally, and with propriety,

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* Thus Pinkerton, the latest of those who have viewed this history, as a history collected from the uncertain materials of tradition, is compelled to adopt the judgment of an Irish antiquary in its favour. Inquiry, vol. II. p. 50.

propriety, applied to that purpose. Sir Isaac Newton, it has been observed, deduces his rule for fixing monarchical succession from more civilized nations; and there are numerous instances which prove, that in unrefined and turbulent states, ten years is an average fully sufficient. Perhaps, however, there is not one of these states which can fully equal Ireland in the violent concussions, and in the peculiarity of those circumstances, by which the tenure of its monarchy was rendered so remarkably uncertain. Should we therefore enter into a detail for the purpose of fixing the epoch at which the dynasty of sovereigns who so long swayed the national sceptre, possessed themselves of the throne, and consequently the epoch, at which the people whom they headed acquired the supreme authority, and should we take into consideration this circumstance, as well as some others naturally arising from the subject, we might perhaps conclude, by placing it not much higher than the arrival of the Picts in the neighbouring island, viz. three, or at the most four centuries before the Christian æra.

Of the importance of the Irish history of these remote ages, little further need be said after the particulars concerning it, into which we have entered. To the antiquary who delights in speculations equally laborious and unprofitable, and who rejects every study which bears the appearance of utility, and which is not recommended by the appearance of uncertainty, its use must be confined, and to him perhaps it may yield what he would deem important assistance. But to those who have chosen the more useful and agreeable departments of literature, these dry and tedious Chronicles, must necessarily be uninteresting.

teresting. Deficient in elegance, and uninstruc-
tive in the lessons which they exhibit,
they might without much inconvenience to the
public, be condemned to neglect, and be buried
in oblivion.

C H A P.

CHAPTER V.

WE have now completed our survey of those different departments of the Antiquities of Ireland, which seem more particularly to require to be distinctly ascertained, and to be placed on a firmer basis than that of opinion, or the prejudice of party. The system which may be collected from the particulars of our Analysis, is indeed very different from either of those which have been so long promulgated, but it is presumed, that from the consistency of the whole, and from the dependence which is placed on the most valid authorities, it may approach more nearly to the truth than either. How far this may be the case, rests not with the author to determine. This, however, he may take the liberty of observing, that unconnected with any support but what they possess in themselves, and without reference to each other, should any one part be disproved by argument, or overthrown by an appeal to facts, which may not have been hitherto brought to light, the others will stand firm, and will remain unquestioned as before. On the other hand, this mutual connexion and general coincidence, will confer additional strength on whichever may thus be impeached; and even though this should be entirely removed, it will be requisite that whatever may be substituted in its place, should be capable of a similar incorporation with those parts which are permitted to remain. If we are
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to relinquish the origin which has been pointed out for the Irish, we must point out some other equally plausible, equally inimical to both of those systems which have been delineated by preceding writers; and at the same time, such as will be reconcileable to the other branches of the present, to the circumstance of their acquaintance with letters, and to that of their having been possessed of historical records. If those facts which relate to their acquaintance with letters in their pagan state, be successfully impugned, their history, which appears to be genuine, will be evidence sufficient to evince the reality of the circumstance, and from their origin we may conclude that they brought letters into this island. And if their history should be proved to be a forgery, their language, their religion, their acquaintance with letters, will separately and together proclaim, that their true history must in its most essential particulars, have agreed with the false.

The great obstacle to a consistent and just system of Irish antiquities, is the lofty opinion which the Irish themselves entertain respecting the superior knowledge and refinement of their ancestors. These chimerical notions, indeed, are scarcely worthy of serious consideration, and the uniform evidence of different writers, by whom the subject has been incidentally mentioned, fully displays the general idea entertained, as well as of these romantic pretensions, as of the prevalence of real science, among a people, by whom they have so long been received. But without having recourse to an expedient, which however plausible, is entirely unjust, we may easily trace this strong attachment to the opinion of some causes, which have, in a more enlarged degree, proved injurious to the most essential

essential interests of the nation. From these, a few writers, in common with their countrymen, have received a most disagreeable bias in respect to their national antiquities; a bias however, which, as it is to be ascribed to a specific cause, cannot lead us to make such inferences as would otherwise be not less obvious than just.

With the high opinion entertained of their superior knowledge, by those classes of men, upon whom in more uncivilized communities, the study of literature generally devolves, we are not unacquainted; and yet there are few who would be deceived by these vaunting professions. The same was doubtless the case with the Druids of this island: and for the disproportionate notions of both, a similar reason can be given. They had no standard besides themselves, by which to judge of their comparative refinement, and the refined circle of their ideas would naturally induce them to imagine that they had arrived at the summit of perfection. In speaking of these subjects, therefore, it was natural that they should use the most hyperbolical terms, and that they should introduce such expressions, as would denote their ideas of excellence and grandeur. But to such who have the advantages requisite for forming a more correct judgment, and who have the opportunity of commanding a more extensive view of the subject, even this circumstance must serve as an additional evidence of the small degree of advancement which such a people has made in civilization and knowledge.

To separate the false from the true, were however, an employment very disagreeable to those whom vanity, and a mistaken patriotic affection would excite to consider the people in question as distinguished for every thing gorgeous and splendid. Instead therefore of detecting

detecting the real state of the affair, they have willingly rested satisfied with an undistinguishing reliance on those representations of this kind which have been preserved, and they have not opposed the suggestions of that *Amor Patriæ*, which would lead them to exhibit every circumstance in the most favourable appearance. They placed implicit confidence in the testimony of those whom they considered as having enjoyed the opportunity of actual observation; they could not suspect that the ignorance of these observers, was the cause of their not viewing the surrounding objects in the same light in which they themselves, from the advantages which they possess, would be enabled to consider them; and they accordingly enlarged on a theme so alluring, with all the warmth of truth, and all the zeal which patriotic veneration would naturally inspire. To those, however, in the mean while, who were not influenced by such partial emotions, the whole of a prospect thus extended beyond its just limits, must necessarily appear in a most suspicious light, and it is not surprizing that a representation so distorted, should be generally considered as the offspring of fancy, cherished by the ardency of prejudice.

Among those modern antiquaries, by whom the pretensions to a splendid antiquary are maintained, the writer of "Dissertations on the History of Ireland," and the author of the "Introduction to its History and Antiquities," appear more particularly conspicuous. They have not only brought it forward to public notice, but have also distinguished themselves by their exertions to maintain its credit against the numerous obstacles which it must necessarily encounter. Both of these writers merit our respect, because of the motive by which they are influenced;

influenced; and though they give too much the reins to the force of their prejudice, yet they differ far from some writers on the subject of the antiquities of these islands, whose conduct has condemned them to public disgrace. Greatly however, it is to be regretted, that by joining with this fundamental error, their efforts should have almost wholly failed of the desired success. With a propriety of diction, a variety and extent of knowledge which had entitled them to no mean rank in the walks of literature, had they not so freely sacrificed to the idol of national pride, their principal success has been limited to the furnishing of a new store of arguments in disavour of that fabric, the erection of which occupied such a considerable share of their attention, and constituted their principal employment. Let the one expunge his contradictions and inconsistencies; let the other explode every thing contrary to reason and common sense; and instead of insisting on the effusions of self-refuted declamation, of which these works present so disagreeable an appearance, let both, if at this late period, it be possible, endeavour to infuse into their productions, a spirit of argument, which may in some degree counteract the great detriment which their preceding labours have undesignedly occasioned. But in doing this, they must at once reject all those splendid speculations which they have so ardently desired to substitute instead of what their prejudices have led them to contemn; and as the foundation for a future and more stable historical system, they must be content to admit, that in most particulars their ancestors should rank on an equality with the many nations in the western regions of Europe, which were either immersed in barbarism, or were indebted for the
seeds

feeds of civilization to the superior refinement of the conquering Romans.

That the ancestors of the Irish were immersed in barbarism, that barbarism, I wish to be understood, which refers to national civilization,* should not shock the rational patriotic feelings of their descendants. They should know, or they should reflect, that in this state were all nations originally; and that in the progress from rudeness, to that refinement which obtains in polished nations, it is indispensable that every people should come under this character. It is not in effect more disgraceful to the Irish of the present day, that their ancestors in these remote ages were uncivilized, than it is to the most distinguished hero, that he was at one period in a state of infancy and pupillage. How much are the illustrious Romans to be undervalued, though the most elevated characters among them, traced their extraction from a band of fugitives and slaves, of robbers and parricides? Or how does it detract from the English of the present day, that they are the descendants of an assemblage of unpolished savages, from the wilds of Germany, and the barren regions of the North?

To ascertain this illustrious ancestry, has however been the sole design of our antiquaries: to this point all their measures ultimately tend; by this all their enquiries, and all their historical researches, are unalterably regulated. And as they have been exclusively desirous to ascertain a point which it will ever be beyond their power to accomplish, it must of necessity follow, that their efforts in this line cannot but be fruitless in their effects, and that in continuing

* See Dr. Campbell's *Strictures*, p. 8,

nuing the unavailing pursuit, they must allow a wide sphere to their opponents, in which to employ against them those weapons which they had originally furnished. Accordingly, their antagonists have not been remiss in taking advantage of their oversights and their errors; and so much scope have they for their animadversions, so extensive is the field for forming and introducing objections, that they have suffered their attention to be almost exclusively engrossed by affairs to which they should have allowed but a secondary degree of consideration. In a word, they have been so confined to the business of raising exceptions against these visionary claims, that they have contracted a natural bias against whatever may be urged on that side, which they have been accustomed so uniformly to oppose; and instead of detecting the real state of the affair, they have limited their operations almost solely to what was consistent with the offensive posture they were led to assume. If therefore their adversaries have wandered wide from the mark, these writers, accustomed to pursue them only in their errors, have equally deviated from the path which they ought to have pursued, and they have in the same proportion neglected the real end of their inquiries. Both parties supposing that they were engaged on the spot on which they should with propriety contend, have been busied in a contest with a self-created phantom: the one first called forth this airy appearance, and in the pursuit of it neglected that reality which it had been in their power to attain; the other, dazzled by the visionary splendor, were too deeply engaged in dispelling the illusion to be at leisure to perceive that it has entirely misled them from the real object of their solicitude.

Writers

Writers on this side of the controversy, cannot fairly conclude from the lofty and exaggerated delineation of those early ages, that for this reason the whole of what is delivered is fabulous. What may we not suppose the ancient Irish to have thought of themselves, when from a cotemporary, and a foreigner, who moreover was very cautious in lavishing encomiums on a nation, which he contemplated with perhaps an excusable portion of jealousy, such a bombastic description of their country, as almost baffles translation, should be extorted;—when by such a personage Ireland is represented “ut
 “ paradisus aut novus circulus lacteus, discen-
 “ tium opuans, vernansque pascuosa numero-
 “ sitate lectorum, quemadmodum poli cardines
 “ astriferis micantium ornantur vibrantibus
 “ Siderum.”* Much might be said to evince the inefficacy of arguments founded on a basis such as this, and to shew that such a mode of precedence as these writers have adopted, will prove wholly foreign to that purpose which they profess to keep in view. The remarks, however, of one of these antiquarians themselves, will prove sufficient, as the same reason which gives rise to them, is certainly equally applicable to the subject at large. “ The exaggerations of Monkish
 “ writers, respecting the prosperous state of their
 “ monasteries,” observes Doctor Campbell, “ in-
 “ stead of exalting the honour of their order
 “ and their nation, have only diminished their
 “ own credit, and draw into question certain of
 “ these reports which if soberly delivered, would
 “ never have been disputed. But it is not from
 “ general, vague, and hyperbolical declama-
 “ tion, but from a careful and dispassionate
 “ view

* Alahelm. epist. Usher. syll. p. 60.

“ view of *facts*, and *construction* of their circum-
 “ stances, that we can form any just estimate of
 “ the state of those times, whether ecclesiasti-
 “ cal or civil.”* It is not, it may be added, from
 triumphing over the absurdities, and ridicu-
 ling the palpable inaccuracies of their oppo-
 nents, that they can hope to attain a just view
 of these early ages : this is to be acquired only
 by remounting to those sources from whence
 they drew, and to others which are common to
 all ; by deducing from them such inferences as a
 dispassionate review of the whole, and of parti-
 cular incidents will suggest ; and by admitting
 into this delineation of the national antiqui-
 ties, not whatever may be in opposition to the
mistakes of a party, merely because they are in
 opposition, but that alone which is drawn from
 the pure sources of facts and original informa-
 tion. The former will be received with avidity
 by the champion of the party ; to the assistance
 of the latter, he who contends for the truth will
 be solely indebted.

What remains for our antiquarians to per-
 form, is simple and reasonable. They should
 afford to those who have not the means of un-
 derstanding the language in which they are
 written, an opportunity of that intimacy with
 them which they may be judged to deserve, by
 rendering them into a dialect which is more ge-
 nerally known. How far the sciences may have
 been cultivated in this island, it is impossible
 for us who have not the requisite access to what-
 ever remnants or transcripts of the literature of
 a former period may be extant to determine with
 any pretension to accuracy ; but I may venture
 to take for granted, that these intellectual trea-
 sures,

* *Strictures*, p. 99.

fures, are not from their *utility*, or their real importance, very interesting to the present age. If this be the case, and if as has been always held out, it has been the object of the learned, to be acquainted with these "first efforts of the human mind to enlarge its powers," through motives of curiosity, it is evident, that we wish not so much for the matter which they contain, as for the manner in which it is delivered. On this principle, Doctor Warner's history, however truly it may represent the transactions of the ancient Irish, and however comparatively free it may be from fable and the decoration of fancy, is not to be considered as so interesting and valuable, as the historical performance of Keating, who not only records the same events, but who records them in a mode which is the object of our curiosity. As this history has been more fully rescued from the obscurity which involves the greater part of the literature of the Irish, we are warranted in pronouncing more decisively concerning its merits. There surely can be but little inducement to study the annals of these barbarous ages, when a king was crowned only that he might be murdered, and where the recital of destructive battles, is necessarily substituted for the detail of the various causes which operated to throw the nation into such circumstances, and of a delineation of the character of those personages whom they record. The modern historian has not therefore through the deficiency of his materials, any advantage over the more ancient compilers, and as on the side of the latter must be considered those particulars which are the subject of our curiosity, it is plain that they alone should engage our attention to the exclusion of the

the voluminous labours of our late antiquarians.

Of their proficiency in the other departments of literature, if any traces of these other remain, the same may be pronounced. They derive whatever importance they may possess, principally, if not entirely from the *manner* in which they are written. We want not the declamation of modern writers to instruct us in a very incomplete manner concerning that of which an accurate notion is to be obtained *only* by a bare view for ourselves; and *they* cannot, however meritorious may be their labours in other respects, answer the end which we require. This is the only line of conduct which is calculated to answer the purpose which they profess is the design of their studies; and as no other, however it may serve to display the *erudition*, or the abilities of these writers, will suffice, the public is entitled to reject, with the proper firmness, and with such neglect, as will tend sufficiently to explain their sense of the *insult*, what is thus involved in such deep obscurity, and what appears of nature so very suspicious. If they profess to remove this obscurity, and if they wish to dispel these suspicions, let them do it in that manner, which alone will prove effectual; and let them no longer persevere in a conduct so ineffectual, and which is perhaps as preposterous as any of the kind of which we have any example. Let us have faithful copies, with just versions of the hidden records of Keating,* of the Psalter of Cashel, of the Book of Lecan, of the Annals of Innisfallen, of those of the Four Masters, and of every other work which they may judge to be of importance. There-
quisition

* See Note BB.

quisition is simple as it is reasonable. They have long amused us with declamations on the inestimable value of these literary treasures; and surely after having excited our curiosity, their conduct will be inexcusable if they do not in the end provide for its gratification.

Were a modern philologist to discover some of the long lost remains of Grecian or Roman literature, the compositions of Theophrastus, or the history of Trogus, is it to be imagined that he would be content with announcing to the world, the importance and value of what he had thus got into his possession, and with giving full assurances that they were the authentic and genuine works of the enlightened ages to which they are ascribed? Or, are we to suppose, that, when urged to give them to the public, in order that all might form a judgment for themselves, and might participate in the advantages of an acquaintance with these valuable remains, he would refuse to concur with the unanimous requisition, and only answer the demand with a continuation of the same declamation, and a repetition of similar assurances. Yet such is the conduct of our antiquaries. We have been teized with the insipid repetition of the same idle excuses, the same pompous declamation, and the same, (shall it be said) studied evasion. Urged as they have been to gratify a desire so universal and so frequently repeated, they shelter themselves under a strain of unmeaning, and extraneous effusions, which fatigue without affording the smallest satisfaction.

To enlarge on this head, were superfluous. I shall therefore only remark from the confession of one of the most eminent of these antiquarians, that they cannot allege in their

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own defence any reason as a plea for this singular mode of procedure. “ Were the early use
 “ of letters in this island, a probable, and much
 “ more a real fact, it would extend to a more
 “ interesting inquiry, than what is produced by
 “ bare curiosity: it would prompt to a desire of
 “ being informed further, whether that art
 “ which was reserved as a state mystery in the
 “ neighbouring Celtic countries, might not have
 “ been made subservient to philosophical purposes, that is to the improvement of the human mind and manners in our own? It would
 “ be required what this improvement was in
 “ kind; to what degree it was carried; and finally, whether the cultivation, whatever it
 “ was, can be dated from an earlier æra, than
 “ that which introduced the Roman language
 “ with the Christian religion into this country?”—Now to what purpose this curiosity should be excited, while no steps are taken for its gratification, it is difficult to conjecture; but when we wish to see through that hystron prosteron, which makes that view principal which should be subservient, and which calls on us to decide on the value and importance of what, after numerous requests, we are not permitted to behold, where we look for a clue to guide us through the maze of absurdity and contradiction?

Yet is the present period highly favourable for the purpose which these writers ought to consider as most important, if they in reality regard those studies as so deeply interesting, and if it be their determined purpose to elucidate them, as far as their abilities and the materials in their possession will admit. The public, we may suppose, would patronize an undertaking, for which the
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calls have been so frequently repeated; and certainly such an undertaking must be more interesting than those publications which have been obtruded on them as original productions, because these recent originals, are only shadows which are valuable, as they refer to the literary reliques they profess to explain. Nor can any greater anxiety be entertained with respect to the necessary access to the collections of these remains, as the public spirit of those by whom they are possessed, has been already amply experienced. Those therefore, who are so sanguine in their desires of rendering justice to the traduced memory of their ancestors, have the greatest encouragement which they could reasonably expect to prosecute their design; and if they are determined to prosecute it with effect, we should expect from them an uniform and successive publication of every inedited work of Irish historians and annalists, as well as of every similar production on other subjects, which they may happen to discover.

A collection of such original documents, will render much of what has been written of late years, nearly superfluous. Accordingly there is much cause for regret, that a late collection of tracts on this subject, from which, from the character of the editor, much utility had been expected, should have so greatly disappointed the public expectation. For though a few useful hints may be drawn from this voluminous publication, yet might it with great advantage be contracted to perhaps one fourth of its present limits: And if in the room of what should be thus rejected, if in the stead of *erudite* and laborious researches on the most trivial and uninteresting circumstances, and even on subjects more important, which have

sunk under the burden of contradictory, and extraneous matter, we had been favoured with various inedited tracts of Davies, Barclay, and Llwyd, with versions or extracts from the Liber Lecanus, the Psalter of Cashel, and with other communications equally valuable, with the expectations of all which we were flattered, how much more successful had been the design, of how much greater importance the collection?

In the prosecution of such an undertaking as that which has been pointed out, it would be desirable, that the public should be favoured with biographical notices of the respective analysts, with critical observations on the credit due to their authority, and on the peculiarities of their design, composition, and genius, and with pertinent illustrations of those obscurities which may be expected to occur. Should this undertaking be limited to a more confined scale, and should publications only of the more valuable literary remains be undertaken, similar appendages will be requisite. But here care should be taken that the public be not burdened with comments and illustrations, swelled by extraneous and undigested matter; and that whatever illustrations or criticism may be introduced, instead of voluminous, declamatory, incoherent, and contradictory details, such as are but too well known already, there should be substituted nothing but what will be remarkable for the contrary properties, for conciseness, precision,* perspicuity, and correctness. These are properties to which (*absit invidia*) our antiquaries seem in a great measure strangers: but let it be hoped that their failure of success, may have taught them to set a higher value on these most necessary qualifications for historical disquisition, and in the present affair,
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* See Note CC.

it is to be expected they will remember, that the office of editor virtually excludes such disagreeable and fatiguing expatiation.

Of want of encouragement in the prosecution of such an undertaking, there can be no reason to be apprehensive, as repeated calls have been made to urge our antiquarians to place these literary monuments beyond the effects of time and the dangers of accident, to bring them forward to public inspection, and to allow them that rank which their merit may be found to deserve. Should a compliance with these requisitions be declined, I am afraid that this conduct will be imputed to a conviction, that it is not for the advantage of our antiquaries, that these works should be rescued from that obscurity in which they have been so long involved, and that these writers, by thus shunning the light, are determined to impose on others, what they do not themselves in reality believe. —Such will probably be the general opinion.—

And while to that *Amor Patriæ* which has been the incitement to so many great and splendid actions, I am disposed, even in its most eccentric wanderings, to grant every possible indulgence; while to those gentlemen who have been most active in the cause, I wish to pay every respect to which, from their established character, and from the nature of their design, they are so amply entitled, I must avow that I can only refrain from condemning their conduct on the supposition that they have hitherto wished to remain insensible to its unavoidable consequence. But I would earnestly urge, as far as my weak influence may extend, that for the sake of their own characters, if there be no other motive, they should no longer defer giving a satisfaction so highly reasonable, and so frequently required.

Until

Until this, or something similar to this be accomplished, "criticism can have no secure anchorage;" and though we may succeed in drawing a tolerable outline, yet it will be impossible to delineate with propriety the inferior compartments.* Such, however, is the fatality which has attended this subject, so prone are we to extremes, that while on one occasion we see the most flimsy and indefinite attempts at the former, on another, we have ample occasion to contemplate the "microscopic eye" of the minute observer, exploring with singular minuteness, detached and minute particulars, unimportant when considered in themselves, and when regarded as connected with others, still less interesting.* Such a mode of procedure, when the parties are so mutually at variance, and where such scope is permitted for difference of opinion, must give frequent occasions for a disagreeable collision; and indeed so numerous have been the instances of this sort, that they have in the end been productive of the most bitter animosity, and of the most rancorous personal hatred. These private quarrels, in which the public are by no means concerned, have arisen to such a height, that besides shewing themselves on almost every possible occasion, and sometimes at opportunities of a most unreasonable kind, they are likewise prosecuted in particular invectives, which are, introduced solely for this shameful purpose. Thus one of these writers, in a recent performance, has appropriated to the purpose of retailing trivial and unmeaning personal anecdotes, and of scattering abroad scurrility and ribaldry, an appendix, consisting of nearly twenty octavo pages, in which

* See Note DD.

which the professed design is fully prosecuted *throughout*. What is not less extraordinary, this very writer, in the conclusion of his curious philippic, after obtruding on the public such a torrent of *particular* abuse, coolly observes, that "he is much too deeply engaged to carry on a literary, or rather a *personal* warfare." If any thing could excuse such low and illiberal abuse, it is the conduct of the opposite party, by some of whom, more particularly, abuse equally disgraceful and indecent is retorted, and who have not scrupled to descend even to the mean use of news-paper pasquinades,* which are equally distinguished by the fulsome adulation bestowed on themselves, as by the Billingsgate and scurrility which is uniformly prepared for their antagonists. Thus,

Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra.

It is however exceedingly to be regretted, that the opposing champions should be so hotly immersed in the business of mutual annoyance, that they cannot procure so much time as to contemplate the unworthy spectacle which they altogether exhibit, a spectacle as ludicrous to some, as to others; it must of necessity be painful.

In closing these observations, it may not be superfluous to make some remarks on the general state of the controversy. That the subject of Irish antiquities has deeply suffered from those national writers, to whom this study was for some time almost exclusively confined, is too apparent to admit of contradiction. The warm calenture of patriotic affection, has urged them
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* Under the title of critical reviews of such productions.

on to the commission of what perhaps it will be impossible for them speedily to repair. And yet, even in such unfavourable circumstances, the motly system which they thus alternately raised and destroyed, has obtained the patronage of men who could not be influenced by interested motives, of enlarged minds, and of a cultivated understanding: it had for a defender, the philosophical observer of the southern parts of this island; and it can still boast of the approbation of the elegant and admired author of the scientific letters descriptive of its northern coasts. Such liberal and intelligent observers must know, and knowing, must justly despise those arts, the introduction of which is too apparent to be concealed; and though they cannot withhold the applause due to the ingenuity of those by whom they are adopted, they will find themselves unable to pay the equally desirable compliment which should be due to their candour. They will reject with due emotions of entire disapprobation, the sneer, which serving as a shroud to conceal the total deficiency of argument, baffles all serious recrimination, and levels every opposing obstacle with the ground; the vehement assertion, which in order to effect its destined purpose, to serve as an equivalent to facts the most incontestible, and to disconcert reasonings the most decisive, is reduced to the necessity of borrowing the greater part of its force from the overbearing manner in which it is pronounced; the sophistry, which being solely employed in perplexing the most obvious truths, through the means of trivial and fallacious objections, declares that confusion which it has created to be the unerring criterion of falsehood.

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The Antiquities of Ireland, will require many a successive process, in order that they may be thoroughly purified from the dross of succeeding ages, in which they are but too deeply involved. But the edifice itself will stand sure, and will at length be cleared from the unworthy and perishable decorations to which it is so highly superior; and for such a purpose, though scepticism may seek to undermine the foundation, and though prejudice may employ all the powers of declamation, and all the arts of sophistry, in order to involve the whole in the wished-for confusion, yet even these measures so seemingly dangerous, may in the event prove most thoroughly efficacious. Even the more apparently friendly, though in reality the more inimical zeal of its imprudent votaries, anxious to adorn or to disfigure it with the incongruous decorations of fiction, may in the end be found to assist in the general work of its establishment. To the attacks of such opponents, and to the restless anxiety of such injudicious friends, is every historical system exposed, however unexceptionable the basis on which it is raised, and however the various parts may be modulated by the unerring criterion of truth. Yet its stability will repel, its inherent propriety will ever continue to reject, the professed attacks of its enemies, the latent injuries inflicted by those who may assume the rank of its defenders.

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T H E R E are few species of literary investigation which from their appearance are less calculated to attract, or from their supposed utility to engage a portion of general regard, than those inquiries which respect the origin and antiquities of nations. So abstract is the speculation, that it can only invite the attention of those who enter upon every disquisition with a view solely to that pleasure which arises from the discovery of truth; and so apparently uninteresting are those truths, which it is the object of these enquiries to ascertain, that even of the small number of these, still fewer will be disposed to engage in such obscure and intricate speculations. Even these inquirers will frequently be deterred by the doubts which they may reasonably entertain with regard to their success, in attaining that end which they propose

pose as the ultimate reward of their labours. Such, too, frequently, is the scantiness, or such the deficiency of those materials which are indispensibly requisite to serve as the basis of every critical research, that the conclusions to which they will lead may naturally be expected in a great measure to partake of the uncertainty and the instability of the foundation on which they are reduced to depend. In such circumstances where so ample a scope is allowed for the interposition of opinion, and the introduction of the various peculiarities which diversify private judgment, every inquiry must be tinged with the particular prejudices, and distinguished by the numerous conjectures which may be expected to originate from the fancy or the errors of the writer by whom it is treated; and the result of the general examination, instead of exhibiting some uniformity in its appearance, is but too strongly marked by an inconsistency and a discordance, which are the certain criterion of error. Each antiquary is so concerned in exploring a route hitherto undiscovered by others, and is so busied in adding to the variety of views, all equally drawn from the same object, all depicted with similar materials, that the mind, fatigued with the successive and different ideas of truth with which it is presented, is finally involved in the deep mists of a seemingly irremediable confusion.

Such is the state of contradiction and uncertainty to which at one period or other, almost every inquiry of this nature is reduced. An issue of this sort, were it the final conclusion of the investigation, would leave not a little room for regret, from a review of the erudition, the ingenuity and unwearied exertions which would thus have been bestowed in vain. Gradually, however, we find in most instances, that the
variety

variety of opinions is removed, that the inconsistency and contradictions, by which the subject was confused, give place to accuracy and uniformity, and that in the stead of that mass of peculiar and discordant notions, which had such a tendency to perplex and to mislead, is substituted the simplicity of precision and truth. Instead of being handled by learned dulness, which would confuse, or by systematic prejudice, which would misrepresent subjects less obscure than those which are thus enveloped in the remoteness and uncertainty of antiquity, these inquiries attract the notice of the enlightened critic, or the philosophic historian, and are prosecuted with the success, which from such interposition might naturally be expected.

The history of those various nations, by which, from the earliest ages, Europe has been possessed, affords a striking proof of what has been advanced. After having long been subjected to the uncertainty of doubt and the caprice of opinion, we at length behold it *nearly* reduced to a consistency and a precision, which must be productive of permanent advantage in the conduct of the various historic disquisitions, with which so extensive a subject is necessarily connected. It is not my design to trace the various errors by which this comprehensive history has been obscured, or the different hypotheses which have contributed to perplex it. I am only to remark, that what has been observed with respect to the present state of these inquiries is, with a particular exception, amply confirmed in a tract which has lately appeared under the title of a "Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of the Scythians or Goths," in which the author of that work has with much clearness and ingenuity, stated the result of the labours of his predecessors

predecessors in the same field of historical investigation, and has interwoven with this statement a considerable portion of novel and useful information. This tract is professedly written as "an introduction to the ancient and modern history of Europe;" and it is with pleasure to be added, that it cannot fail of being essentially conducive to the interest of both, as well as to the placing the talents of the writer, as an historical disquisitor, in a conspicuous and highly estimable point of view.

To counterbalance merit so extensively acknowledged, and so justly respected, faults of no very trivial nature would be required. And it is exceedingly to be regretted, that such faults should occur in this, as well as in a subsequent historical investigation, as not only greatly to detract from the reputation of the writer, but also to threaten most serious consequences to that history on which he has bestowed so much erudition and labour, and exerted such vigour of understanding.

When we first take up this historical essay, though we can scarcely avoid being struck with certain unfavourable peculiarities, we cannot, nevertheless, fail of being impressed with almost implicit confidence in the impartiality, the ardent love of truth, and the freedom from prejudice, which appear so strikingly to mark the character of the author. "His work," he informs us, "is not a controversial one, it is written with the most sincere and sacred design of discovering truth:"* wholly untainted with prejudices to defend, without even *opinions* to disclaim, he cannot be supposed to have in view any other object than that which he so frequently

* P. 93.

quently inculcates: with the design of attaining this object, and “knowing that without going “to the very bottom of a subject like this, “no point can be clear,”* he went through a course of reading in chronological succession, every author, both ancient and modern, who could in any wise illustrate the early population of Europe, and in the perusal of the ancient alone, eight hours in the day, for more than a year, we are told, were employed: “a toil of “this kind was too enormous for him to trifle “with any hypothesis, and thus lose his labour, or any part of it; he sought for facts “alone;”† and as historical authorities must ever be regarded as facts, every reader will be disposed to think that little danger is to be apprehended of his not having attained to that “mathematical pleasure, which consists in the “delicious delight in reposing one’s mind upon “truth;”§ a pleasure which he has so diligently pursued, and which he considers as his supreme and ultimate enjoyment.

Proportionate to the expectations which such professions must have led us to form, must be the disappointment we experience, when we discover that mind, which we fondly hoped was superior to the shackles of prepossession, to be notwithstanding, enslaved to prejudices, the meanest and most ridiculous; when we find that that comprehensive judgment, and that energy of understanding, so fitted for pervading the vast and indigested body of materials on which it has been exerted, and so qualified for the arduous business of disposing and arranging in their just proportions, the various parts of the grand historical structure, is, through the influence
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* p. iv.

† p. xv, and also p. 177.

§ ibid.

of these, benumbed and enfeebled, to a degree, which precludes any pretension to accuracy of thought, or even propriety of reasoning, and which totally darkens and obscures objects apparent to the most careless and supercial observer; and when that fund of materials which our author has collected with such labour, and which he has been accustomed to regard with such veneration, appears to be modulated or rejected, or opposed, according to the dictates which prepossession, or caprice may happen to impose.

From whatever cause it is to be traced, our author has imbibed a most inveterate antipathy to the Celtæ, that grand family of mankind, by which Europe was originally populated, and which is so conspicuously distinguished in the annals of Greece and Rome. Hence they are stigmatized with such epithets as outrage all decency, they are represented as "radical and incurable savages," as a "medial race between beasts and men," as "unable to make any progress in ideas or in society," and as stained with all the vices, while they are wholly incapable of any of the virtues of more enlightened and superior beings: hence, though they are delineated as partaking so much of the brute creation, from whom they are but "one degree removed," they are, nevertheless, declared to be so totally devoid of courage, or even ferocity, that "to see them, was to conquer them:" hence, the contrast which is exhibited between the Gothic nation, and a people thus characterized by such an incongruous medley of despicable and atrocious vices, the former of these being almost as extravagantly elevated, as the latter is depressed: and hence proceeds that *total and unqualified perversion* of Celtic history, which has been attempted, and which appears in a tract,
of

of which the professed intention was so exceedingly different.

In the course of the attempt to effect this singular and most reprehensible innovation, every authority which would oppose the scheme of the writer, is either bluntly opposed, or arbitrarily *corrected*, or, as in most instances is the case, is silently passed over; expressions the most unambiguous and the most precise, that language could possibly furnish, are misinterpreted, and their manifest and obvious meaning *denied*; and the various writers whom the dissertator must necessarily oppose, are almost uniformly treated with the foulest opprobrium, and in express and plain terms are named visionaries, lunatics, and idiots.

“ Though these Celtic gentry,” he observes,*
 “ are always ready to invent *lies*, yet there is no
 “ danger from them; for as *folly* is the cause of
 “ their *villainy*, so it is also their detection.”

This sentiment, were it conveyed with more decency of expression, I should on the present occasion readily adopt, as I deem it peculiarly applicable with respect to the scandalous and unfounded aspersions on the character of the Celtæ. With regard to the perversion of their history, indeed, the same cannot be observed, as that alone which would be productive of pernicious effects to the history of Europe, is perpetrated in silence, and as these injurious consequences can only be obviated by a minute investigation for the purpose of detecting the latent corruption. Were such an investigation undertaken with those talents for the detection of literary depravity, which characterize the historian of Manchester, and at such length as

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the importance of the subject would require, we might be presented with the repetition of a scene of historical perversion, unexpected by most, and perhaps to none more surprizing than to our dissertator, whose notice, I most firmly believe, the measures he has been led to adopt, have, in a great measure, escaped. Between this scene and the former, there would however be observed this essential difference, that in the present, the use of these measures has not been pushed to the extent, which in that instance was so remarkable. In that the whole scheme was fully unfolded, and the design as extensively prosecuted; while here, though the plan is as clearly explained, little more than the outlines of the execution are hazarded, and the accomplishment of the whole of what was proposed, is at once attained by the bold and peremptory assertion, that the materials, requisite for ascertaining the various and singular positions which are given as historic facts, are suppressed. Without any further pretension to the honour or the disgrace of a Celtic extraction† than perhaps our dissertator himself, I shall take a concise, though I presume a satisfactory review of the outlines of that scheme of Celtic antiquities, in which not only the history of this people in particular, but of Europe in general, is intimately concerned. And from this review, it is hoped, we may not only be enabled to appreciate the value of the suppressed materials, but that a just estimate of the nature of these historic speculations may be also deduced.

I. That

* p. 98. † The expurgatory egotism, is not altogether superfluous, when we consider with our author, that "to say, that a writer is a Celt, is to say, that he is a stranger to truth, modesty, and morality." Page 96, note.

I. That the Celts were anciently possessed of all the inhabited parts of Europe, and that their territories extended from the Euxine sea, to the Baltic, and from the verge of Muscovy at least, to the pillars of Hercules, is a position so universally allowed, that it would be superfluous to introduce a repetition of the authorities from which it is known. The justice of this opinion, is indeed granted by the differtator; who, neverthe'less contends, that in the days of Cæsar, and indeed long before that period, the Celts were confined to a subordinate division of Transalpine Gaul, and that they were not to be found in any other part of the continent of Europe.* Whence such an astonishing deficiency could have proceeded, he does not condescend particularly to state; and it is probable that his dreadful antipathy, not only to the whole race, but even to the very name, has effectually prevented him from making any inquiry into the means by which it was occasioned. No other cause, it is to be supposed, can be conjectured, than extirpation, a measure he observes, "so truly Celtic, that it could not enter a cool Gothic head; a word not to be met with in human history, ancient or modern."†— Such "brutal madness," is not therefore to be imputed as a stain to Gothic politeness.‡

The

* So glaring is the error of this opinion of our author, which is indeed in a trivial instance or two, contradicted by himself, that I am almost afraid of hazarding the repetition of it, though it is frequently inculcated. See p. 51, 67, 84, 119, et sequent, &c.

† Scotland, Vol. I. p. 236.

§ Herodotus, however, (lib. V. c. 65) among his accounts concerning Scythia, informs us of such an inducement to extirpation, as must have weighed something with a warlike barbarian: he who produced not the head of an enemy, was denied a share of the plunder.

The reader will doubtless be curious to learn from what hidden, or hitherto undiscovered records, this "historical fact" concerning the confined limits of the Celtæ, may have been extracted. He may be assured that it rests upon the testimony of Cæsar, and to discover this testimony, he need not seek further than the first page of the Gallic Commentaries. The great commander there informs us, that (Transalpine) Gaul was divided into three parts, one of which was possessed by the Belgæ, another by the Aquitani, and the third by a people who denominated themselves Celts. This passage was certainly well known already, and appears to have been sufficiently understood. And hence, how can we enough admire the superior sagacity of our author, who has elicited from it a meaning which surely was never thought of before? We are now instructed to observe, that Cæsar here communicates to us the important intelligence, that the body of the Celts, was *exclusively* confined to this district, and that they did not exist in any other country in Europe. Without an adequate portion of the prejudices of our dissertator, I am apprehensive, that in this account generally deemed so obvious, so direct, and so precise, we shall not be able to discover any *expression* by which the Celts are distinguished above the other two nations; any *clause* by which that people in particular is confined to Gaul; or any *passage* in which it is asserted, that the Belgæ, or the Aquitani, were extended over other countries, while their neighbours were limited to that, in which a branch of them was settled. Without similar assistance, we shall find it equally difficult to conceive, that if any of the three is understood to be confined to Transalpine Gaul, the same limitation should not be extended

tended to the whole; or that whatever is applied to the one, is not equally applicable to either, or to both of the remaining two.*

Yet, upon this foundation it is, that our dissertator has erected the Celtic history which he has introduced to the notice of the public. While the reader contemplates this most astonishing effect of literary prejudice, he will prepare himself to meet with others of a similar kind, almost equally surprizing, which a very superficial examination of this novel hypothesis, will easily detect.

To enter into the controversies which have been agitated, and which are not perfectly decided, with regard to the respective proportion in which the Celts and the Scythic nations were concerned in the population of Britain, would require an expatiation incompatible with my design, and would not be of much moment in discussing the grand question before us: the history of Irish population has already been reviewed in the preceding Analysis, and the statement which was made will preclude the necessity of repeating what has there been observed;

* With respect to our author himself, with whom perhaps it would be in vain to attempt to reason on such a point as this, he is referred to p. 124 of his Dissertation, where he makes an observation concerning Cæsar's neglect of the origin, &c. of the Scythians or Germans, perfectly applicable to himself, with relation to that great writer's description of Gaul. Would he, from an account of the West-India island of Domingo, (and upon occasion he is a great friend, perhaps with reason, to analogical interference) conclude, that because "this island is inhabited by three distant
" races of people, Spaniards, French, and Africans, all of different extraction from each other,"—either that there are no Negroes on any other of this range of islands, or that the once flourishing nations of Spain, or of France, were dwindled to this colony, which they had formerly planted, and that their remains were only here to be met with?

ed: and for the eastern Cimmerii, who occupied the southern confines of Europe, and who are not concerned in the present disquisition, because their origin and their history have not been contested, this slight notice will suffice. It therefore, remains to inquire concerning the extraction, possessions, and power of those Celts, who are to be discovered from ancient history in Gaul, in Spain, in Italy, and in Germany; and to investigate the origin of those swarms of Gallic emigrants, who were so long the terror of Europe, and whose arms were so formidable to the nations of Asia.

1. With respect to the population of Gaul, in the time of Cæsar at least, we find that those parts north of the Seine, were occupied by the Belgæ, that the Iberi, or Aquitani, were circumscribed by the Garonne, and that the remaining division was possessed by the Celts. The testimony of Cæsar, sufficiently probable in itself, is corroborated by the adoption, and is confirmed by the concurrent evidence of various writers, the united weight of whose authority, we have not any pretence to controvert. The dissertator, however, informs us,—from the testimony of “Cæsar, de bello Gallico, passim,”—that the illustrious Roman found them confined to the “utmost corner of Gaul.”* And yet so inconsistent is error, or what perhaps with justice deserves to be marked by an epithet far more severe, that we afterwards find him, upon the authority of Diodorus, even after he has sufficiently *qualified* that authority, reduced to the necessity of allowing, that those very Celts, confined as they were to “the utmost corner,” to
“the

* P. 49.

“ the most remote part of Gaul,” touched also
 “ the northwest *extremity* of the Alps.”*

“ The whole provincia Romanorum, or
 “ Gallia Braccata, was,” we are informed by the
 dissertator, “ possessed by Germans.”† For proof
 of this, we are referred to the unfortunate ar-
 gument respecting the “ braccæ;”§ and we are
 also reminded, that Cæsar has assigned the Ga-
 ronne as the southern boundary of the Celts.
 A true logician, intent on deducing the most
 sapient inferences, would hence conclude, that
 this Garonne was the northern limit of the
 Narbonnese province; though he might possibly
 be perplexed at finding the Aquitani transmuted
 into Germans, because he has learned that the
 former alone were possessed of the territory in-
 cluded within that river. For an illustration of
 particulars, however, we are referred to those
 inedited materials, which, our author informs us,
 he has in his possession, and which though they
 contain “ a special examination of these colo-
 “ nies,” he has thought proper to suppress.‡
 What may be the nature, or what the authority
 of these materials, it is not for us to determine:
 but if we be allowed to judge from those argu-
 ments which we have been permitted to exa-
 mine, we shall probably be inclined to give the
 preference to the testimony of Strabo, by whom
 we are informed, that “ the Nabonnese province
 “ is inhabited by those Gauls, who were *prima-*
 “ *rily*

* p. 125. † p. 144. § See Note B at the end of
 the volume. ‡ p. 144. And yet unless these extraordinary mate-
 rials are very extensive, they might have been introduced to satisfy
 the curiosity which the novel positions they are designed to esta-
 blish, must naturally have occasioned: and they might possibly
 have been inserted without enlarging the size of the volume, were
 it purged from the fatiguing digressions, the disagreeable excres-
 cences by which it is so singularly disfigured.

"rily named Celts," and who particularly instructs us; that "from them it was, that those who bore their name had derived this appellation."*

Those Gauls who inhabited the territories on the confines of Germany, are, by our author,† pronounced to be Belgæ or Goths. This is averred on the authority of Diodorus, the substance of whose information‡ is, that those who inhabit at the Alps, and to the north of the Pyrennees are Celts, while they who live more northward, on the borders of Germany, are called Gauls. Hence the differtator would *prove* to us, that Diodorus says, this latter people were Goths; that is, he wishes to evince that they were not Gauls, because they were Gallic. Thus amazingly confused do objects appear, when viewed through the medium of prejudice. Yet does he himself tell us,§ that the Celts of Spain, were the only people of that name whom the Romans called Celts, as every other people of the same description they denominated Gauls: and for this he accounts, by observing that the Romans acquired the first intelligence of Spain, through the medium of the Greeks of Marseilles, by whom, as well as by all of the same people, they were denominated Celts. Surely therefore, if the Greeks of Marseilles, occasioned the Romans thus to name the Gauls of Spain, much more would this be the case with respect to those Gauls, among whom they actually lived.|| Thus can we on his own principles, account for that distinction of which
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* Strab. IV. 189. † p. 125. ‡ p. 354. § p. 145.

|| The information of Diodorus, was in this point drawn from Roman sources: from the Roman military expeditions, in these western regions we must suppose, was derived intelligence unknown to the Greeks.

he is disposed to make such an unwarrantable use.

That I should controvert his suppressed materials, will not, I presume be expected; and as he has not given us any reason for dissenting from the clearest and most explicit authorities, it is not to be supposed that I should here detail the various testimonies of antiquity, which he has not thought proper, except by peremptory assertion, to impugn. The testimony of Cæsar is sufficiently decisive; and a writer who would, from that testimony infer, that the Celts were confined by the Seine and the *Marne**, to the “utmost extremity of Gaul,” will not easily be moved by authorities not less decisive, though it may very probable happen, not so illustrious.

To point out the precise limits, by which those nations who occupied Gaul were separated from each other, were a very difficult task; but we may venture, instead of confining the Celts to the “utmost corner” of this extensive region, to extend them over, perhaps, three fifths of the whole. The Seine was the general boundary of the tribes of Scythic extraction; the Garonne, in the time of Cæsar, included the nations of Iberian descent; and the remainder was in the possession of the ancient inhabitants. Some of the Gothic tribes, indeed, settled within their limits, and, at a subsequent period, some of the Antiquani: But to counterbalance this, we find that the Celts were also possessed of some districts in the territory of the Belgæ, though
by

* In delineating the extent of this utmost corner of Gaul, the “initium capit a flumine Rhodano;”—“attingit a Sequanis et Helvetiis Rhenum;”—“vergit ad septentriones;”—“continetur Garumna, (not the Loire) flumine:”—of Cæsar, are wholly “contemned, i. e. unnoticed or denied by our author.

by modifying or curtailing the testimony of Cæsar,† our author would wish us to believe, that *all* the Belgæ were of Scythic extraction.

That the three different nations, by whom Transalpine Gaul was inhabited, should sometimes be blended under the general name of Gauls, is not more remarkable, than that the various European colonies which were planted in the western continent, should be denominated Americans. So simple a principle has the dissertator extended to a most unwarrantable length, and such is the *machinery* employed to introduce into Celtic history, a fundamental and thorough perversion. To enlarge on the various services to which this trifling circumstance has been applied, I shall leave to future and more minute examiners; but I shall conclude this particular topic with a remark which merited his serious attention, but which he has palpably neglected. As the name of Gallic belonged primarily, and with strictness to the Celts, and was *always* retained by them, and as to those Goths, however extensive the nations, or however few the districts to which this appellation was extended, the distinction was merely *adventitious*, and given on a particular occasion, it is clearly to be inferred, that he should ever have presumed every Gallic nation to be of Celtic descent, until from indisputable authority, and from the *express* testimony of antiquity, the contrary were evinced. This rule, so very simple and so very obvious, would scarcely have been neglected, far less would it have been uniformly disregarded, by an inquirer who kept truth singly in view, and who had no sinister design in the introduction of that confusion unavoidably incident to such

† II. 4. Inquiry Scot. Vol. I. p. 24.

such a rejection. But the antipathy to the Celts was an emotion too powerful for our author to oppose, and the unbounded sway which prejudice was accustomed to exercise, was too tyrannical to admit of any hesitation in complying with its arbitrary dictates.

2. The investigation of the extraction of the Celtæ of Spain will not long detain us, as it is, fortunately, determined by the dissertator, the only writer by whom the general opinion has been opposed. "The Celts of Spain," he informs us,† "were *certainly* of Gallia Bracata, which "bordered on Spain;" and as *certainly*, it has been shewn were the "real Celts," that people whom he calls "old Celts," who did not, he avers, send colonies into this country; "because those "parts of Gaul within the Garonne were conquered by a Spanish people, the Aquitani," and "that the Celts proper or old savages of "Gaul—should have conquered Iberian possessions, would have been a phenomenon indeed."*

3. The *original* population of Italy by the Celts has already been fully illustrated in a memoir of the learned Freret, and it would be superfluous to detail what he has collected on this subject. The only objection (were we to retort on the dissertator in his own language, we should denominate it a quibble which can affect the conclusions of that celebrated antiquary, whose name indeed is not introduced, is the exception made against the testimony of Pliny, with respect to the antiquity of the Umbri. It is averred by our author, that the great naturalist rests his authority on a trifling etymology; such an etymology indeed. as resembles

† Scotland, vol. II. p. 24.

* Solinus, polyh. cap. 8.

§ Histoire de l'acad. des Inscript. tome xviii.

bles those of Whitaker and Macpherson concerning the names Caledonia, Albion, and other such appropriate appellations. An author who so "detests the utter frenzy of etymology," would certainly, and with justice, allow very little credit to the derivations of these glossologists which would subvert, as they frequently would, those fundamental positions which he has taken such pains to establish; a writer of such extensive information must have known, that the origin of the Umbri was settled on a firmer basis than what was to be deduced from such an attempt at etymology; and one who *partially* quotes the testimony of Solinus, could not possibly have been unacquainted as well with the real source of the historic information, as with the *different* one from which this etymon *adopted* by Pliny was primarily derived.* And an inquirer who instituted a laborious investigation, with the most emphatic protestations of his ardent love of truth, and of his contemptuous disregard of every hypothesis, every opinion which was not warranted by the most indubitable authority, should not have suppressed that information which would have most effectually superseded the evasive subterfuge to which he has been so unwary as to descend.

4. Though the greater part of Germany was possessed by nations of Gothic extraction, yet were the northern parts of this extensive region in a great measure retained by the Celts. Here were the "Gentes Ætixæorum", whose speech is mentioned by Tacitus† as being different from the German, being British, (which in *this* case must, therefore, be Celtic) while in other respects, they conformed to the usages and ceremonies of the formidable Suevi. So singular a
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* Solinus, polyh. cap. 8.

† German. sect. 45.

circumstance as that of a Celtic people being thus so nearly on an equality with the flower of the Gothic race, must undoubtedly be suppressed by the dissertator, whose attachment to the latter people, however, is so confirmed, that he takes care to remind us of the subjection of the Gothini,* a people in the south of Germany, who were of Gallic extraction. In the northern parts of this country were likewise the Cimbri, that renowned people, which was almost extinguished by Catulus and Marius, though the comparatively inconsiderable remains long continued to survive the national calamity. Their ancient territories, according to Plutarch,† extended to a high degree of northern latitude, and reached in a southern direction to the Hercynian forest. These limits, though too inaccurate to convey exact ideas of their possessions, evince that they were very considerable.

5. We now come to the Gallic colonies who settled in Germany at the Hercynian forest, and in Italy on either side of the Po, and who extended their arms over Greece and the East. These Gauls, the dissertator, without any authority except what he can collect from unqualified inferences and erroneous deductions, pronounces not to be Gauls, and asserts to have been Germans. The manner in which, according to the ideas of our author, they acquired this foreign appellation, has already been stated: and to this expedient he is obliged to have recourse, even on the present occasion; when, from the
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* The etymon (for etymology though a species of madness, and perhaps, as we are farther informed, of contagious madness too, is by no means unfrequent with our author) which is given us of Gothini is rather curious. "Their name Gothini was *probably* ironical, 'good people' p. 173. — What exquisite wit! how *prodigiously* droll! — and yet it is difficult to determine whether our author meant this pretty fallacy by way of *mauvaise plaisanterie*, or whether he was not actually in earnest.

† Vit. Marii, p. 410.

superabundant population of Gaul, while Germany itself remained in a manner a desert, and received from the former country a considerable increase in its population, it is clearly to be inferred, that the possessions of the Germans (in such a country) could not have been extensive; and when from the remoteness of a period, at least five centuries prior to the æra of Julius Cæsar, it is not less obviously to be concluded, that that residence could not have been long.

Happily this point has been illustrated by the great historian of Rome †, who has given us a clear view of the origin, and a prospect of the subsequent adventures of these emigrants. He informs us, that those Gauls, who had determined to emigrate, divided themselves into two bodies, of which one directed their course towards the wilds of Germany, and settled at the Hercynian forest; while the other marched into Italy, a country, in the history of which they are so highly distinguished. In mentioning that Transalpine Gaul was, conformably to the authority of Cæsar, possessed by three nations mutually distinct from each other, Livy is particular; nor is he less accurate and precise in informing us, that *these* emigrants were the Celts. With some portion, however, of his peremptory bluntness of censure, the dissertator denies that Livy relates these transactions with historic fidelity; and avers, that in this instance he “uses poetical and fabulous liberty.” A fable notwithstanding, of which each of the leading divisions is respectively confirmed by the authority of Julius Cæsar and Tacitus, of Polybius and Strabo, must be allowed the merit of being a fiction of no common nature; and of such a description is the fable before us.

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† V. 33.

With respect to the German migration, and the settlement in this rude and uncultivated country, of the former division of these self-exiled Gauls, we have the testimony of Cæsar,* that “ though the Gauls (qui ipsorum lingua
 “ Celtæ appellantur) were in his time enervat-
 “ ed by the use of those luxuries, with which,
 “ through the vicinity of their more polished
 “ neighbours, they were furnished,†—yet were
 “ they formerly superior in valour to the Ger-
 “ mans; and” that “ their country being burdened
 “ by an excessive population, they sent colonies
 “ beyond the Rhine, one of which, the Volcæ
 “ Tectosages, settled in the country adjacent
 “ to the Hercynian forest: These colonists, he
 “ informs us, still maintained this settlement,
 “ and they observed the same manners and
 “ usages, by which the neighbouring Germans
 “ were characterized, and were equally distin-
 “ guished with them for the practice of the same
 “ barbarous virtues, and for the reputation
 “ which their warlike achievements had ac-
 “ quired.” To this Gallic colony Tacitus‡ adds, the Helvetii and the Boii; and he cites and confirms, in express terms, the testimony of Cæsar. Without deigning to hint at the *existence* of such unambiguous and decisive passages of these illustrious writers, the dissertator avers in the most unqualified language, that “ the Helvetii,
 “ Boii, Tectosages, were German Gauls, who had
 “ warred with their ancestors, and settled among
 “ them.”|| The only shadow of proof with which this assertion is attended, is this curious reason:—“ Cæsar tells us, that the Belgæ were
 “ in continual war with the Germans, as indeed
 “ the German nations were among themselves.”

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Such

* de B. G. lib. VI. sect. 22.

§ Germania, sect. 28.

† See also *ibid.* I. 1.|| *discer* p. 147.

Such is the gross contempt of the most illustrious authorities, and, such, in this instance, the undisguised, (I wish I could not say) the deliberate attempt at historic perversion. And it is to be apprehended, that a charge so harsh, though so highly deserved, cannot be palliated by any plea which our author could urge from a supposition that he considered Cæsar, and much more, Tacitus, as speaking of German Gauls, and as confined (however improbable) to a people of such an extraction. For these very Gauls do we find him on another occasion,* *contrasting* with the barbaric nations of Scythian origin, with the *professed* design of evincing that there was between them a *radical* difference.

To come to the Italian settlements of the Gauls, the dissertator, after having upon his own credit asserted, that this narration of Livy, is in a great measure fabulous, observes, that “ it is
“ beyond doubt, from many concurring anti-
“ ents, that the Cisalpine Gauls, *had passed into*
“ *Italy* at a *late* period and were not ancient inha-
“ bitants.”† What other meaning there may be in this indubitable assertion, than that of the sackage of Rome, at the lowest, being a late period with relation to the æra of Livy, I confess my inability to ascertain.

Our author proceeds,—“ But Livy in com-
“ posing his tale concerning an event five hun-
“ dred years *old*, and of which he could have
“ no circumstantial evidence whatever, found
“ that Polybius, a Greek writer, and perhaps
“ other Greeks of Marseilles, called the Cisal-
“ pine Gauls, as they did all the Gauls, Celts.
“ Hence, knowing also, as the passage shews,
“ that the Celts of his time were but a third
“ part

* p. 103.

† p. 146.

“ part of the Gauls, he understood the Celts,
 “ lately so called by the Greeks, to be Celts
 “ proper, and has of course formerly derived
 “ the Cisalpine Gauls from the Celts proper.”—

Such are the various colours which we find prejudiced to assume. It here adopts a method of sapping the credit of history, as effectual perhaps, on many occasions as any which could possibly be used for such a purpose, that of requiring the authority on which original historians may have depended. The affair, however, is to be reduced within a narrower compass, and we are to be referred, not to the materials from which Livy extracted his account of an event so remote, but to the credit which may be due to his actual observation:— And it is scarcely necessary to remark, that the credit justly due to a far less illustrious *remarker* will easily outweigh the *capricious opinion* of a modern speculalist, who has taken the liberty of converting that *opinion* into an historic fact, and who has been not less scrupulous in supporting it, not by the concurrent evidence of any writer of antiquity (which he has not attempted, and which indeed he would find it impossible to produce,) but by a total and general rejection of the express testimony of every ancient author who is particular on the subject.

Born at Padua, the great historian, who has displayed an acquaintance so surprizingly accurate and minute, with the various quarters of that extensive empire, whose progress to maturity of strength he has so successfully described, must have enjoyed particular advantages, and must be considered as singularly accurate with respect to the circumstances which affected the origin, the manners, and the distinguishing peculiarities of that neighbouring state, with which his countrymen were so intimately acquainted, and

against which they had imbibed a national prejudice. The stores of self-acquired information with respect to a particular branch of the Gallic nation, were *confessedly* enlarged, and amplified by the discoveries which had been made by the most celebrated writers of his own and former ages, from whom he derived an *accurate* and *discriminative* knowledge of the present situation and circumstances of the extensive region from which the Italian colonists had derived their name and their extraction. Hence then must he have been particularly well qualified to ascertain the origin of those colonies with which he was so intimately acquainted: And indeed if the Celts were such a race of dastards, that to see was to conquer them, it is morally impossible that such a surprising phenomenon would not have been known, and being known, would in the sequel have been thus concealed, or would have been so uniformly contradicted, as well by the entire tenor of his narration, as by the facts which he relates. The question is not whether the history of the Cisalpine Gauls, as it is written by Livy, be genuine or spurious; but it is demanded whether from the peculiar advantage of personal acquaintance, and from the astonishing fund of acquired information;—of information it may be added, which being collected by a cotemporary concerning the period in which he lived, and by a cotemporary who had the opportunity of recurring to the most copious, and most authentic sources of intelligence, must be deemed of a nature far superior to whatever modern industry, or modern prejudice, if even partially successful, would attempt to bring into competition;—whether from such a superiority in his favour, the great historian is to be considered as a qualified evidence in every circumstance which affects the obvious relation

relation to be *observed* between the Gaulish colonies of Italy, and the *respective* nations which continued to occupy the country from which their origin was confessedly derived?

The dissertator, it is presumed, will not venture to decide this question in the negative: and, if such should be his conduct, we may at least expect him to inform us concerning the singular advantages, which enable him to pierce through the darkness of antiquity, and by which he has been so fortunate as to detect the errors of those illustrious guides, in whom we have so long been accustomed to repose implicit confidence. The same useful discovery which has proved so effectual in exposing this palpable ignorance, and in tearing away the veil which concealed from the keen penetration of cotemporary investigation, objects apparent to the most common and superficial observation, must also be applied to correct the negligence, and to supply the defects of the most accurate historian, and the most judicious geographer, who have reflected lustre on antiquity.

From the information of Polybius,* we learn, that the Veneti of Italy, were settled in that country at a period prior to the Gallic irruptions; and from the same authority, confirmed by the evidence of Herodotus,† we find that they were a branch of the Illyrian nations. And from the testimony of Strabo,§ who makes a particular and marked exception of the Veneti, and who compares them with the Veneti, a people of Belgic descent in Transalpine Gaul, we find that the mutual resemblance between the *languages* of both, was so obvious, as to induce him to allow them a common extraction. Thus, whether we derive the Italian Veneti from Illyria, or whether we adopt the erroneous,

* Polyb. II. 17.

† Herod. I. 5.

§ IV. 297.

neous, though apparently well founded conjecture of Strabo, we trace in this people, indubitable traces of Gothic descent.

But far different is the case with those Gauls, who made a succession of irruptions into Italy, and at length possessed themselves of those extensive regions, bordering on the Po, and extending along the range of the Alps. Between these settlers and the Veneti, an uniform and marked distinction is constantly preserved; and every reader of Livy and Polybius must remember the enmity which prevailed between the ancient settlers and these recent hosts of invaders, an enmity which was productive of such effectual advantage to the distressed common wealth of Rome. Their origin, in fact, was different. Their language was not Illyrian; it was not German; and though these two branches of the Gothic stem, even at such distance from each other, were still so obviously similar, yet was that of these Gauls diverse from both. And yet it is from the Illyrians, or from the Germans, that these Gauls, if indeed they were not Gauls, are obvious to be deduced.* When therefore, it is so clearly to be inferred that they were distinct from either, and when this obvious inference is confirmed by direct information and positive authority, we must be compelled to allow

* The Dissertator himself, inadvertently we may suppose, but with the design of ascertaining a real historic fact, allows, in another place (p. 57), that Polybius, in discriminating the Venetian Illyrians from the Gauls, meant that these were real Celts. That these real Celts, were Celts of Cisalpine Gaul, whom the historian was at length describing, he however carefully suppresses. And when the *name* of Polybius is introduced on the present subject, as having misled Livy, with respect to every thing of this kind, the same suspicious silence it preserved, though this passage, and this acknowledgment would have vindicated both the one and the other. This is by no means the only quotation reduced to the necessity of maintaining hostilities against itself.

low them that claim to the appellation and the origin of Celtæ, which has so strangely been called in question.

With respect to the Senones who proved so formidable at Rome, and who, according to the *assertion* of the dissertator, were of the Semnones of Germany, their claim of a similar nature must be equally allowed. That they were of the same extraction with the Gauls who settled on the banks of the Po, we have particular and precise information: no writer, I believe, calls them Germans, or hints at their German extraction. The Semnones did not colonize Gaul, and at a period so remote, they were in all probability not a little distant from its confines: the distinction of their names appears to be uniformly preserved; and not less uniformly maintained, is the difference of their extraction. Instead of being Germans, as our author, without thinking proper to adduce any authority, contends, they “were Gauls from the verge of “the continent, and the shores of the ocean,”* of the same nation with those who settled in Cisalpine Gaul,† and of the same nation with those swarms of emigrants who extended their devastation to the Greece and the East.§

As this is a topic of some importance, and as the dissertator has been here *uncommonly* profuse of his accumulated store of materials, I shall bring forward the whole of the reasoning which he has adduced to secure a point of such material consequence to the success of his system of historic innovation.

“The manners of the Cisalpine Gauls, described by Polybius, are German.”—They are most assuredly so, as far as German is connected with
the

* Florus . 13.

† See Livy ut supra.

§ Diod Sic. Vol I. p. 355. *Wess,*

the condition and the state of society in which the German nations were at that time immersed: they are the manners of every barbarous nation in similar circumstances. If however we are allowed to have recourse to an expedient which our author denominates "counterpoising nonsense against nonsense" we shall be under little apprehension of failing in the attempt to turn the balance of historic probability in favour of the Celtæ. Polybius who ascribes to these Gauls the barbaric manners which have been noticed, ascribes to them also, in his historical narrations, that remarkable fickleness and that disposition to sudden and unaccountable change, with which their Transalpine progenitors have been so frequently charged.

"The Celts were remote from Cisalpine Gaul, while it was surrounded by Germans on the North, and by other Germans of Gallia Braccata, on the west."—That this brutish and dastardly race should pierce through the impenetrable barrier, would, we suppose it to be inferred, be accounted a phenomenon not less remarkable than their success in forcing a passage through the Aquitani into Spain. And yet the Cimbri could not only break through this barrier, but through one far more extensive. However *their* passage may have been effectuated, whether by *compromise* or by arms, we may observe, on the present occasion, that neither expedient would have been necessary. These Galli Braccati were, it seems, actually Celts: So that from "the most remote corner of Gaul" to the vicinity of the Adriatic do we find a continued succession of these despicable Celtic communities, by which the whole of the intervening space appears to have been occupied.

"Pelloutier

“ Pelloutier draws the names given by Livy
 “ from the German Gothic. But though such
 “ etymology is uncertain,” that is as we find
 it on a former occasion* explained,—though
 “ etymology and single words and names have
 “ converted the literature of the eighteenth
 “ century into a tiffure of visions” and “ though
 “ he who builds any hypothesis on them should
 “ be taught to study the etymology of helle-
 “ bore, yet” after such a direful sentence “ the
 “ frequency of similar names among the Ger-
 “ mans deserves notice.” This remarkable
 similarity is the resemblance to be traced be-
 tween *Ambi-gatus* the name of a Celtic prince,
 and the names *Ambi-variti*, a Belgic tribe, and
Ambi-orix a Belgic prince; between *Bello-viesus* a
 Celtic prince also, and the *Bello-cassi*, and *Bello-
 vassi*, Belgic tribes; and between *Sigo-vesus* ano-
 ther of these Celtic names (names it is to be
 remembered which occur in the *tale* of Livy
 which is rejected fabulous) and *Sege-stes*, *Segi-merus*
 and *Sigo-vesus*, German names mentioned by
 Tacitus. Such is the intolerable trifling which
 is introduced as a cloke for the determined op-
 position to the most illustrious and the most
 unambiguous authorities! Our author’s pene-
 tration must indeed be great, when without any
 acquaintance with the Gothic, as it should seem,
 except what regards the modern English and
 French dialects of it, and without any know-
 ledge of the Celtic (indeed no Celtic names are
 produced, nor is there any mention of a defici-
 ency of such names as should be produced, to
 complete the contrast) he can at once from the
 sound alone, assign to either language, any word,
 which may be brought forward for the purpose.
 As

* p. 35.

As a specimen of his glossological powers we may venture to adduce the termination *rix* which he informs us is "infallibly Gothic." We must then admire the simplicity while we are astonished at the potent effects of this "uncertain" "infallibility" this wonderful spell which can so suddenly convert those dastardly Cimbri,* whom to see was to conquer them, into brave and warlike Goths, and which can produce from that deterioration of Character, which in them was unalterable, all the shining and illustrious qualities which distinguished this favoured race.

It is however time to come to the "Gallic colonies in Illyricum and Thrace which were" of German extraction. For proof of this, we are, with the accustomed "peremptory brevity" informed that "Livy (XL. 57.) tells us that the "Scordisci and Taurisci were of one speech with "the Bastarnæ."† But this passage of Livy appears to be interpolated; for of the Taurisci this historian makes no mention whatever.‡ The resemblance in language here mentioned will however require some explanation.

The

* Whose monarch was Boior *rix* (Plut. vit. Marii, p. 419) What a formidable trio! Upon a difference so exceedingly important does our egregious dissertator thus vehemently declaim.

† p. 147.

‡ "The author who could foist in (says our dissertator, p. 99. note) "the word *Angli* in a quotation "from so common a book as Pliny's "Nat. Hist. may well be supposed to *sick at nothing*. This (Macpherson's) *Introduction* abounds with such vices as have stained "no other work since the world began."—Observe what a flow of words our author can command for the illustration of this pleasing and elegant subject. "It might be pronounced the most "false and dishonest book ever written were it not only the "most foolish and ignorant. He who, in *the broad day of authors, in every body's hands, could act thus*, what must he have "done in the midnight of his Celtic nonsense, where no eye "could espy him?"—Poor Angli.

The Origin of the Taurisci our author has undesignedly ascertained, in a manner, it must be confessed, rather unsatisfactory:§ but as it is with *him* we are to contend, and as he is here in a great measure in the right, the matter shall be rested on his own principles. The Norici he *proves* to be Gothic; and Pliny informs us that this people was formerly denominated Taurisci.†

With respect to the Scordisci, it would suit with the scheme of our author that a *resemblance* should be shewn between them and the Thracian nations, rather than that these two nations should appear to be the *same*. Were this not the case, he might have proved the fact, not by inference, but by the direct evidence of Appian, from whom we learn, that the Scordisci had the same origin with the Triballi and Illyrians.*

In these Thracian and Illyrian nations there was an admixture of Celts, of which Strabo gives us very precise information.†† Thus, the Iapydes, we find, were a mixed nation of Illyrians and Celts,** retaining in some degree the manners of either people: Thus also we find that the Getæ overthrew and wasted the Celts who were mixed with the Thracians and Illyrians, and entirely cut off the Boii and Taurisci, (a branch, it should seem, of the extensive people who assumed the name of Norici;) thus, too, we are again informed, that some of the Sarmatæ and Bastarnæ were intermixed with the Thracians, and that with these, the tribes in particular to the south of the Ister, were mixed also the Boii, Scordisci and Taurisci, Celtic nations.§§ In another place it is again repeated that the Scordisci “dwelt intermingled” with the

§ p. 57.

† III. 14.

* p. 62. *Steph.*†† lib. VII. *passim*.

** p. 314, 5.

§§ p. 296.

the Thracian and Illyric tribes.† And to this, it is probable, the fables, cited by Appian, respecting the partial Celtic origin of these numerous and extensive nations, allude. What scope our differtator could have for making comparisons between the language spoken by these settlers, who in all probability had by degrees dropped their own, and assumed that of the people among whom they were immersed, and the language of a nation of the same extraction with this people, it is then easy to judge. Very intimate indeed must have been the Incorporation, when a historian, who writes *ex professo* on the subject, could glean from them little of their Gallic origin, except what was comprised in some stories of the nature of traditionary tales, and when he pronounces the people among which it appears they were intermingled, collectively to be the same with the various surrounding nations.

The

† P. 313. At an earlier period, we find from Polybius, (lib. II.) that there were settled in these parts several Gallic nations of the *same extraction* with those who colonized Cisalpine Gaul, whose origin has been already ascertained. Polybius mentions the Taurisci, who must have been, as we have seen, in subsequent periods, immersed in the tribes of the more ancient settlers; and the Agones, whom I do not remember elsewhere to have observed. The former, it should seem, retained their Gallic name, perhaps, because the Romans were more acquainted with the Gauls, and because in their historians, Grecian and domestic, their achievements and their names are preserved: the latter must have been intermingled with the Illyric tribes. On some occasions, the Gallic tribes kept long separate: on others, they were immediately lost among the more numerous Illytians: but we find perhaps for the reasons given already that they frequently imparted their name to the tribe with which they incorporated. In the lapse of a very few centuries, they were all uniformly the same people; some having sooner, others at later periods, been immersed in the surrounding barbarous nations with which they were confederated, and among which they resided.

The famous expedition of the Gauls into Asia, which terminated in the formation of an establishment there, is now to be considered. "St. Jerome," we are informed "by telling us "from personal knowledge that the speech of these "Gauls was the same with that of the people of "Treviri or Triers where he studied"—true "puts "the *German* extraction of the Galatians beyond "doubt: "*—this however appears to be exactly the opposite. If the Treviri were Germans, then indeed were the Galatians, of German extraction likewise: but that they were so, and not Celts, our author has not taken the trouble to prove. Pliny ranks the Treviri among the Belgæ:† but in the same list we may also find, at no great interval, the Sequani and even the Helvetians. Mela observes that there were three principal *denominations* (*tria summa nomina*‡) by which the Gauls were distinguished Aquitani, Celts and Belgæ; and he says that among these last, the Treviri were the most powerful. But Mela does not by any means say that the people under each denomination were of different extraction: For among the Celts were Aquitani and Belgæ; among the Aquitani were probably Celts; and there were, most certainly, tribes of this people among the Belgæ. The particular divisions of each are therefore but incompletely known; and their respective limits can be delineated only from the casual and imperfect notices of the ancients. To examine in this place the various passages of Gallic history in which the Treviri are concerned, (and we shall find them in that history very frequently to occur,) were to transgress all the bounds which I have prescribed to myself in
this

* 148.

† II. 17.

‡ III. 1.

this dissertation. I have only to observe that none of these, as far as I can discover will give them a right to a German origin, though they were in the neighbourhood and were almost surrounded by nations of this extraction; and that though they are, as we have seen, sometimes called Belgæ, from their situation, as were other tribes, incontestibly, Celtic, yet are they all along placed in opposition to the Germans, and mentioned as Gauls: and I shall produce a passage or two which will evince that the Treviri were a branch of this depreciated people.

Tacitus, I well know, has been frequently quoted, and may perhaps again be triumphantly produced, to prove that the Treviri were of German extraction. But Tacitus has been inadvertently or unguardedly pressed into the service. After speaking of the Gallic settlements in Germany, he tells us that “the Treviri and the Nervii are of themselves earnest in the affection of a German origin, as though this boast could annihilate their *resemblance* to the Gauls, and could remove from them the national imputation of effeminacy.” This appears to be the obvious meaning of the illustrious historian: * and very different is his account of the real German colonies, on the same river, the Vangiones Triboci and Nemetes, who “haud dubie” were of this origin. The Ubii seem to have been the counterpart to the Treviri; the one was ashamed of a German, the other of a Celtic extraction: the Ubii had been, through their vicinity to the Gauls, in some degree polished or effeminated; while

* For thus runs the original:—Treviri et Nervii circa *affectionem* Germanicæ originis ultro ambitiosi sunt, tanquam per hanc gloriam sanguinis a *similitudine* et inertia Gallorum separentur.—Germ. cap. 28.

while the Treviri, though Gauls, being in the neighbourhood of the more hardy Germans, acquired a dislike of the national character. Their sentiments, indeed evince, that they were sufficiently removed from the "inertia," the consequence of immature refinement of their countrymen. If they were in reality Germans, they need not have been under any apprehension of being *confounded* in the *national* imputation on the Gallic character, since that *national* character, as such, (and as such it appears that Tacitus means it) could not have affected them, and they need not have taken any pains to remove the general stigma. By wishing to remove it, and by endeavouring to have it removed through the means of *affectation*, they shew very plainly how much they were affected by the blemish annexed to their origin; and by their anxiety to clear themselves in such a manner, they undesignedly confess its existence. By what means the Nervii and the Treviri could lay claim to an affinity which so flattered their warlike pride, we can only conjecture: national vanity and national prejudice, we find to be satisfied with very frivolous and unsatisfactory appearances, when the more plausible pretences are deficient. The old Nervii were cut off by Cæsar: concerning their successors, this is not the place to inquire. They were probably a mixture of Germans and Gauls; and they might thence assume to themselves the honour which they appear to have so ardently desired. What allegations the Treviri may have produced we cannot say; but they probably were such as are expressed by their neighbours the Ubii, who pleading in behalf of the foreigners residing with them, declared, that
 "deductis olim et nobiscum per connubia so-
 ciatis

"ciatis hæc patria est."* On the confines of Germany, the Treviri were, we may suppose, connected with its inhabitants who lived in their vicinity, and since they so much affected an affinity with these neighbouring foreigners, they would, it is probable, be very far from discountenancing such settlers among them. To these then there was on this quarter a favourable opening: and the right of citizenship which was thus so much favoured, might afford the desired pretext, since it was doubtless a very principal cause of that uniformity among all the Gauls, which, in the times of Marcellinus, was so observable, that the ancient national diversities were to be known, in a great measure, from the testimony of former historians.†

Throughout the whole of the disturbances occasioned in Gaul, in the beginning of the reign of Vespasian, by the inroads and ambition of the Batavians, and the rebellion of the Treviri, this people is distinguished in the recital of Tacitus as Gallic; is placed by him as such in opposition to the German nations; and is represented as allied in a common *affinity* with the Gallic tribes. Of this assertion a single instance will be sufficient confirmation: and this is the animosity which is by the Roman general, by whom the Treviri had been reduced, and who after their reduction addressed them in a conciliatory harangue, § represented as having subsisted between them and the Germans, and which, from the same authority we learn, was not only personal, but hereditary. And if the Treviri, whom the Roman commander represents to have been all along inimical to the Germans, were of this latter extraction, would he declare in terms the most

* Tacit Hist. IV. 65.

§ Tacit. Hist. IV. 73.

† Amm. Marc. lib. xv.

most express, that this animosity was "ever" occasioned by the avarice of their *enemies*, and by their design of leaving their paternal marshes, in order to possess not only the fertile territory of the Gauls, but also the people by whom that territory was occupied? These occupants, it is to be remarked, comprized the Treviri, who are addressed in the second person; and if they were not Gauls, how can we reconcile what was thus allowed in the presence of that people, when they are exhorted to retain this *ancient* and *national* enmity to the Germans, for reasons, which instead of being applicable to the latter people exclusively, were equally to be referred to themselves?*

From Cæsar himself, we have similar information. He observes,† that the Rhemi were the

* If we again take the liberty of counterpoising nonsense against nonsense, (what a glorious expedient on such emergencies as the present) we shall find that the Gauls in question had among them Druids, who, though extirpated by Tiberius, and extirpated too by Claudius, still continued to exert their influence over their countrymen, in the reign of Vespasian. (Tacit. Hist. vi. 54.) Here however is the Salvo: Tacitus must be mistaken; for after the extirpation of the Druids in Mona, "we hear of none but female Druids." Vol. I. p. 40.

This is however too violent: and Tacitus, by the word *Druidæ*, must mean only female Druids, upon which *female* termination depends, I presume, our author's assertion; for *Druidæ* never was used unless to denote these female companions or attendants of the Druids, ex. gr.

Habent tamen—*magistros sapientiæ druidas*. MEL A. III. 2.

Sacrorum *Druidæ* positis repetitis ab armis Lucan, l. 446.

Inde *appellati* interpretatione Græca possent *Druidæ* videri.

Plin. xvi. 44. *et alibi*.

Viguere studia laudabilium doctrinarum inchoata per bardos et eubates, et *Druidas*. Amm. Marcell. lib. xv. &c. &c. &c.

† G. B. ii. 3.

the only people among the Belgæ, who did not unite in the general combination, which occasioned him so much trouble, and which appeared to threaten such dangerous consequences in the second year of his command. The Rhemi protested their innocence with respect to a connection with their countrymen on this trying occasion, and as a proof of their fidelity to the Romans, they voluntarily offered to deliver them hostages, and to assist them by every means in their power. But “*all* the remaining “ Belgæ, (reliquos omnes Belgas) were in “ arms; the Germans beyond the Rhine had “ joined in the confederacy; and so vehement was “ the universal passion (omnium furor) that the “ Rhemi could not restrain the Sueffiones, though “ connected with them by every tie of affinity, “ of government and laws, from joining this “ formidable union.” The Belgæ, Cæsar on farther inquiry was informed, were *mostly* all (plerosque omnes; in point of accurate discrimination, Cæsar is by no means deficient) of German extraction; and he gives us a minute account of the names of the tribes, and the military force respectively of each, by which he was opposed. Were the Treviri omitted in this catalogue, we might with some confidence remark that they were not Belgæ:—they are omitted in it:—but when without any particular remark, any apologetical exception, we discover them in arms in the interest of Cæsar, and actually sending him succour in this very emergency,* what reasonable doubt can possibly be entertained?—And that this was the case, that they were

* B. G. ii. 3.

were thus in reality engaged, Cæsar is surely sufficient evidence.

The Treviri were not on every occasion so faithful to the Romans. We afterwards discover them in open opposition to Cæsar, and upon this occasion, besides the uniform, though in some cases, vague appellation of Gauls, we shall have to remark some information of a more definite nature respecting their extraction. Cæsar tells us of the Gallic custom of putting to death the man who should last obey the summons directing a general meeting for the purpose of making a hostile expedition: and that this custom was not known among the Germans, it were superfluous minutely to state on account of the well known propensity, and the correspondent practice of that warlike people, who were far from requiring to be stimulated by such a horrid expedient to the exercise of an employment in which they delighted, and upon which they ever entered at their own voluntary motion. That the Treviri who so greatly affected the manners of this free and barbarous people, because, as such they corresponded with their disposition and sentiments, should *adopt* a foreign custom so indicative of that effeminacy, the imputation of which they disdained, it cannot, with any shew of probability be urged: and yet from the *practice* of the Treveri* it is, that Cæsar takes the occasion to remark this *national* usage.

Without transgressing the limits of polemical decorum, I might here observe, that the Gallic origin of the Treviri, is placed nearly beyond the annoyance of the sceptic, or the caprice of the dogmatist; but prejudice itself must allow, that the German extraction of this people, is in *some* degree dubious. This uncertain descent in-

P 2

capacitates

* B. G. v. 47.

capacitates therefore the tribe which it affects from being a standard by which to determine the origin of the Galatic Galati: on the contrary, if the origin of these can be accurately ascertained, it must direct us in our decision concerning the extraction of the Treviri. And it can be accurately ascertained: The Galati were a detachment from the grand army of the Gauls, which under the conduct of Brennus, experienced such prodigious calamities in the course of their irruption into Greece. Concerning this, *all are agreed*, and their history is so accurately, and so minutely recorded by different writers, that to entertain a doubt of it would be ridiculous in the extreme. With regard to the extraction of these Gauls, Pausanias expresses the unanimous sense of antiquity, when he informs us, that “ they dwelt “ in the extreme parts of Europe, on the great “ ocean; *The river Eridanus runs through their “ territories.*—The name of Gauls they have but “ lately received: they formerly named *themselves* Celts, and were so denominated by “ others.”* The history of these Galati, forms the last link of the chain by which the Gallic expeditions are connected: that all these expeditions were undertaken by the same people, it is almost unnecessary to remark; and at every step we advance, the origin of the Galatians is the more accurately ascertained. To refer to what has been already observed, will therefore give to this subject, what it does not indeed require, additional corroboration. And I am only further to observe, that the dissertator has completed the groupe of self-contradictions, in making these Galati of German extraction, since the
Tectosages

* Pausan. Attic. p. 6, Xyland. If any doubt should remain, compare Cæsar, bell. Gall. I. § 1. where the same account of their name is given, and nearly the same expressions are used.

Tectosages of whom they were partly composed, were the same with a branch of those Gauls whom he has on another occasion compared with the Germans, in order to evince between them a radical difference.

In this review of the various and scattered branches of the grand Celtic nation, I have, I believe, retained all of the authorities and proofs, adduced by the dissertator, and I have brought forward, without deviating from the track which he has himself marked out, the leading principles on which he has proceeded, principles, by the assistance of which, he has attempted to subvert the history of Europe. If the reader be surprized at the small number of these, when all can be comprised within such a moderate compass, he will not have less reason for wonder, when he considers not only the manner in which they are framed, but the flimsiness and the futility by which they are so generally, and so strikingly marked. Nor will his surprize or his emotion be lessened, when he reflects that these are the flower of those "ample materials," which suppressed as they are, must be considered as the basis on which this castigation of history is supported.

From another writer who thus attempted a fundamental correction of so comprehensive a history, a correction, which whether deserved, or improper, he must be conscious, was an innovation, we should require that respect to the public opinion, which would teach him to endeavour to account for his singular conduct, and which would induce him to attempt to satisfy us in a manner far different from that of exhibiting a few garbled citations, and a small number of trifling and inconclusive inferences, while the extensive materials for the purpose,

if

if indeed any such materials existed, would be professedly concealed. But it is argued, that the professed intent of the work is different, and that it is designed as a basis to the history of Scotland. This indeed appears to have been the primary purpose of the author: but, from the ample sketches of different parts of European history, which he has, with propriety, introduced; from the various views which he has taken of that history, views entirely unconnected with the antiquities of Scotland, and indeed from the subsequent enlarged scheme of the dissertator, in which he professes to establish a firm foundation for this general history, and in the conduct of which he has resolved "to leave nothing in the inkhorn;" from these, and from many similar professions, and circumstances corresponding to these professions, we may venture to conclude, that it was his design to accomplish what he so publickly proposed, and that what was given under the title of "An Introduction to the Ancient and Modern History of Europe," was in reality published with such an intent. On the Scandinavian history, we might with reason expect he should be more copious, and when that part is compared with the other proportions of the work, we find that he was so. But he cannot acquit himself of a peculiar and most marked neglect of these Gauls, who, if his hypothesis be true, were entitled to share of attention, equal to that bestowed on each of *the other nations*, and far greater, if we consider the singularity of this innovating scheme.

The plea of "*brevis esse laboro*," is in this case therefore *peculiarly* inexcusable: and the only circumstance which he could urge in his favour, that of a proper selection of his "ample materials,"
of

of such a selection as would be so really decisive and *precise*, as to leave very little room to regret the suppression of the rest, this circumstance is totally against him. Since "all history shews" that he is not less right in this particular, than in others of a less disputable nature, it would have been easy to produce for his purpose, one or two direct and precise authorities or citations, as in other instances he has done; to have contented himself with laying down this concise and simple ground work, secure of its stability; and to have established the few leading positions, (and these *leading* positions are indeed few) on that foundation, which has been so effectual in supporting other parts of his system: And perhaps, if this had been done, the room which it would have occupied, if that were an object, would not have been more than what is taken up by the incomplete and unsatisfactory plan which he has deemed it prudent to pursue. But when "all history," instead of being favourable to his innovation, is violently perverted by the attempt to introduce it, such a clear and convincing mode of establishing his peculiar notions, were evidently beyond his ability; and to compensate for it, another scheme must be adopted. Such passages as may seem most proper for the purpose must be wrested, such authorities as oppose it, must be neglected or violently contradicted, and such inferences must be deduced on every occasion, as the most egregious trifling will furnish. A collection of ample materials of the *former* sort, relating to this point, *it were impossible* to form; and this collection must therefore, of necessity, be of that kind, which should ever be prescribed in those inquiries the basis of which is truth, of that sort of which the specimens present
such

such a disagreeable picture; and since they are extensive, these historic materials must be proportionably stained with all those marks of literary depravity, which common prudence would incline to retain in obscurity. Yet it were disagreeable to be obliged to suppose that a fund of perverted quotations, of garbled and falsified passages, and of inferences obviously illusory and deceptive, is actually in existence. If there are any materials at all, they must certainly be of this stamp; and candour would incline us to presume, that they never were thus deliberately manufactured, though from the repeated assertions of our author, even this point is not a little embarrassed.

Of such materials as the dissertator has thought proper to bring forward to public inspection, we have taken a view, and this view will not tend to weaken the credit of what has just been observed. Such is the issue of an examination which has proved so unfavourable to the interest of our learned author. Instead of seeking solely for truth, and for the sake of truth alone, accurately and carefully investigating every point which required to be ascertained, we find that he has set up a phantom, to which he has sacrificed his usual judgment, the fruits of his laborious exertions, and, on not a few occasions,—shall it be added,—his boasted integrity: Instead of displaying that moderation and calm impartiality, which would incline him to weigh with the requisite deliberation, the slightest apparent objections, and instead of exhibiting that liberality and candour, which would seek to excuse the mistakes of those whose errors he might happen to detect, we find him resolutely determined to neglect or to oppose those obstacles, which if examined, would prove wholly
destructive

destructive to his singular hypothesis, and we see him every where busied in defaming the credit and blackening the character of those who, he was conscious, opposed his particular schemes: And upon the whole instead of deducing historic facts from that body of materials which he has so industriously accumulated, and the authority of which he with propriety considers as unquestionable, do we not find him as far as this subject is concerned, uniformly engaged in that occupation which he has described in this elegant, this dignified language, "Put out the candles that we may see the clearer."?

II. It is the just remark of an elegant writer, that "No errors are so trivial, but they deserve to be mended.*" The foul aspersions on the national character of the Celtæ, which proceed from the same source with those more material attempts to sap the foundation of their history, are indeed trivial, as they betray themselves to every intelligent observer. Yet as they are pronounced with that confidence which may serve to perplex some, though it may fail to convince them, it may not be superfluous, especially as the subject is now taken up, to investigate the matter with a little attention. And this investigation will admit of further apology, as it will perhaps in some degree tend to elucidate what has been the subject of more serious disquisition.

Laying down as a fixed rule, as an incontestible maxim, a radical inferiority in the Celts, by which they have always been precluded from making "any progress in ideas, or in society" and from which their character has taken an unalterable distinction, the dissertator

hence

* Pope.

hence takes occasion to infer such conclusions as must partake of the solidity or the instability of the basis, on which such deductions must depend. The reader will doubtless be curious to learn where are contained those heinous charges against them, by which he is so unceasingly fatigued, and he will wish to know on what evidence this well known race of mankind is to be ranged with the Blemmyes, Ichthyophagi, and other similar monsters of Antiquity. But to gratify such a reasonable curiosity, I deem it most expedient to refer him to the body of authorities which the dissertator has accumulated for the purpose of substantiating such extraordinary charges:† to introduce them here would be to introduce a repetition of the ridiculous trifling which has been noticed with respect to the article of etymology. These accusations amount in number to *three*, and though the voluminous collection is again introduced in another part of his work with little variation in the expression, and with as little in the matter, yet in both cases is every one of the numberless testimonies withholden, which might atone for the heinous offences.* But what renders our author almost wholly inexcusable is the adoption of that most disagreeable collusion which he finds necessary to shape these accusatory evidences to his purpose. Whenever any thing honourable to the Gallic name is brought forward, (nor is their merit upon occasion conceal-
ed)

† p. 69.

* It is curious to remark the acuteness of our author in discovering the *mantica* of his neighbour, while he can so effectually conceal his own from similar inspection: "Mr. Hume's history" he with some justice observes, "stands solely upon a system, and it is the only History I have ever met with, in which the evidences against are utterly concealed and past over as non-existent."

ed) they are pronounced not to be real Gauls: but when it is necessary to instance as a discredit to the "real Gauls" the "*tumida credulitas*" of the "*genus vaniloquum*" (*two* of the *three* horrible crimes of which the charge is made to consist, then indeed Gallicus is applicable to the "old Celtic" race.*

We have however reclaimed a large portion of those nations, which the dissertator has ranged under the Gothic standard; and it is to be presumed that those admirable qualities, by which they acquired such a distinguished honour, will be permitted to plead in favour of their rejected compatriots. A few observations on the leading branches of these will perhaps insure a continuance of the favour which has thus been imparted.

The British Celts have been honoured with a due share of our author's detestation: The Welsh indeed appear to have conciliated a small degree of favour, on what account we are left to conjecture. It does not seem to have proceeded from respect for the merit of the *Silures*, their ancestors, the mention of whose resistance to the Roman power, more gallant perhaps than even

* "The Gothic poetry is replete with that warm alacrity of mind, cheerful courage, and *quick wisdom* (*risum teneatis?* which attend superior talents. *Death* is in it *a matter of laughter*." Vol. I. p. 389.—Quick wisdom this indeed.—A polished Goth says somewhere, if I mistake not, that "the rudiments of wisdom are a freedom from folly." The folly which dictated this expression, since it is Gothic, must atone for the "*philosophia avara et fœneratoria*" of *some* of the Celts, since *others* of them seem to have arrived at a pitch of *wisdom* and correspondent practice between *this* acme of human attainments, and the efficacy of their brethren. (Val. Max. II. 1.) But see the Celtic rant in *Ælian*, var. hist. xii. 23; it is, I am forced to avow, a little tinged with the Gothic perfection of our dissertator.

even that of the Caledonians, when peculiarity of circumstances is considered, more determined, certainly, than the opposition of the neighbouring Belgæ, would have formed some sort of objection to the asseveration that “*all history shews to see the Celts was to conquer them.*” A similar objection might be apprehended from an account of the character of the Mæatae, who, confessedly were Celts; and who though distinguished from the Picts as a different people, by Dio, are nevertheless *blended* with them, in the various circumstances of the minute description of both nations which is given by that historian.* This description, equally comprehensive of both, which could not be by any means overlooked by the dissertator, as it is to be found in an appendix to the history of Scotland, is nevertheless, with the accustomed deference to prudential considerations and private concerns, wholly passed over in silence!

Frequently are we reminded that the Goths in different instances assumed the name of Celts;—“as more reputable” subjoins a writer of some ironical remarks on this subject.† What is here added through a mere fallacy of humour happens however to coincide with the truth; for Strabo in describing the Celts of Marseilles, informs us, that this people, who we find instead of resembling their countrymen with whom they had once been on a footing of equality emulated and equalled the refined republics of Greece,‡ had *originally* born the appellation of Celts; and he gives it as his opinion that the name was extended to all the nations

* Xiphilin. ex Dione in Sever.

† Gent. Mag. July, 1790. p. 602.

‡ Cicer pro Flacco, Justin, XLIII, 4.

tions who afterwards received it, on account of *their* superior distinction and fame. Whether the opinion of Strabo § be just or erroneous, is of little moment: we are only concerned to remark that this opinion was founded on probability and the ACTUAL APPEARANCE of things. The inference is grounded on a fact; and whether that inference be true or erroneous, we have the testimony of this estimable writer that the *fact* was certain.

The dissertator however does not seem disposed in this affair to give credit to Strabo, or indeed to any writer whatever. He is himself an host; and, on his own authority, he ventures to maintain hostilities against the united force of Antiquity. He informs us that “in speaking
“ of the Gauls, the Celts, the most distant part
“ of the Gauls are out of all question; that dastard race who were vanquished by a lieutenant
“ of Cæsar with one legion:” * and for proof of this new fact he refers us to the conclusion of the second book of the commentaries on the Gallic wars. This information is repeated in another passage, † where it is said, that “had the
“ Romans found Celts in Caledonia, they would
“ have totally vanquished them *at once* with a
“ single legion as they did Celtic Gaul.” On this novel intelligence it is to be remarked that the part *conquered* was not perhaps more than an eighth or a tenth of modern France; that of the *seven* tribes, then conquered, there was *one*, the Veneti, whose contest with Cæsar, the ensuing campaign, was not a little memorable; and that
of

§ Strab. IV. 189,

* p. 85.

† Inquiry Vol. I. p. 385. And yet Ostorius found Celts in Wales.

of those tribes of which it is thus averred "Celtic Gaul" was composed, perhaps the greater part, if not the whole, was of Belgic extraction.!!!†

Leaving the Gallic emigrants whose martial character will not be disputed, as well as the Celtæ of Spain, who were superior in valour to all the nations between the Pyrennees and the Rhine,§ I shall conclude this subject with some observations on the history Cimbri. Though of the our author was sufficiently hardy to take these liberties with the Gauls in general, as well as with all the other branches of them, yet he appears to have been somewhat guarded in his conduct with respect to these northern Celts. The Cimbri, he grants, were a grand division of the great Celtic nation, and "they were" he informs us "far superior to the Gallic Celts in prowess."* The reason of this difference between nations radically the same, he would in some measure ascribe to the "constant superior hardness of northern nations." Yet is it not remarkable that that state of savageness should be meliorated by climate, -which he so constantly and so positively avers to be incurable? And how are we to suppose that to be altered by any cause, which is represented as incapable of change?

If the reader wishes to see "a piece in which all historic evidence" and well indeed may it be subjoined, almost every sign of common sense "is attempted to be melted down in the aquafortis of distempered zeal," he is referred to the 171st page of the first volume of the enquiry

† Compare Cæsar, "oceanumque attingunt"—with Strabo (IV. 94, 5.) who distinctly particularises two.

§ Strabo, p. 196.

* Inquiry, Vol. II. p. 36.

quiry into Scottish history; where if he should fail of receiving *new* information concerning the Cimbrian expedition, he must impute his failing wholly to himself. Pity however it is, that the whole of the evidence of Antiquity is not there collected; and in particular, it is to be regretted that our dissertator is entirely silent with respect to the subsequent exploits of the Atuatici, a detachment of the grand body, which effected that, with regard to the Belgæ, in which the collected army had failed, and effected it so fully, as to compel these Germans to grant them a territory, which they continued to maintain solely by the reputation of their bravery, and the force of their arms.*

But all the fame of the Cimbri, is, it appears, to be considered as an augmentation of the glory, not of the polished nations of Gothic origin alone, but even of the more unrefined tribes of the same extraction. The Cimbri, we are told, were expelled by northern Germans; and as an evidence of this newly discovered fact, we are referred to our author's asseveration, an authority, in which he appears implicitly to confide. Plutarch in his account of this people gives us a more plausible and at the same time, a far more generally received account; which is that the Sea by gaining on their territories, had reduced them to the necessity of exploring new habitations.† The authority of Plutarch the dissertator, in his accustomed manner opposes, and bluntly declares that "he fables." For this assertion he does not however appear to have any other foundation than the opinion of Strabo,

* Cæsar II. 29,—34.

† They did not, it should appear, contract a desire for a roving life, until they had been for some time accustomed to it.

bo, which though it is not cited, is similar in this point to his own. But Strabo who wrote almost a century nearer to the time of the event, and who notices the current relation of cotemporary, or nearly cotemporary historians, is employed in the passage to which I allude, § in refuting a mistake which his own inadvertence created: he there observes that it were idle to suppose the Cimbri to have been ejected from their ancient territories, by the vicissitudes of the tides, which he gravely pronounces to be uniform; nor does he appear to have considered that the overflowing of the sea, by which it gained on the land, and which he confounds with the tides, is very different from this regular motion of the ocean. His mistake extends still farther; for he argues from the circumstance of a small part of the Cimbri, remaining still in these northern regions, that (the motion of the tides) the overflow of the sea, did not occasion the migration of the others;—as if the sea, if it had overflowed, might not have left room for a part, though the territory occupied by the remainder was covered. Nor less inconclusive is the reasoning of our dissertator, who concludes that the Cimbric migration was not occasioned by an excess of population, *because* the remains of the nation were so inconsiderable. That this migration was not owing to an excess of population is indeed granted; but it does not follow as a consequence that the Cimbri were expelled. These remains of the Cimbri would scarcely have been left behind when almost the whole of the nation was compelled to retire; nor could they, it is presumed, have subsisted so long in such circumstances as we have evidence that they did.

did. * There is no evidence that they were expelled; and the probability of the testimony of Plutarch is fully corroborated by the knowledge which we have, of the operation of the sea on these northern coasts, where its depredations have been, in some places, very considerable.

To adduce here the various testimonies of Antiquity in favour of the Celts, were to extract passages from almost every Greek and Roman writer. It remains only to obviate a plausible objection which might be urged on this subject, founded on the advantages which enabled the Scythians to force the Celts from such extensive territories, and to compress them into a compass, so small, when compared with their ancient possessions. The reason of this superiority is not very abstruse. The Scythians came from Asia, the parent of arts and refinement, and on this account they naturally were superior to the Celts who had been removed from such advantages, and had more degenerated into barbarism. Hence then the superiority of the Scythæ, by which they were enabled to compress the former possessors of Europe, within limits so very disproportionate. And hence also may be explained the reason of that remarkable superabundance of population in Gaul, at so early a period, a superabundance for which it would be difficult, on any other supposition, to account. In subsequent periods, therefore, the Celts made ample returns for the violence which they had formerly suffered, and they recoiled on their pursuers with a force which

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* Ptol. lib. 2. cap. 2. Claudian. lib. 4. Cos. Honor.

—— latis paludibus exit,

Cimber, et ingentes Albim liquere Cherusci.

Claudian likewise corroborates the "fable" of Plutarch: but he will, it is probable, be treated as poetic evidence:

Hic Oceani stagnis excita supremis

Cimbrica tempestas, altasque immissa per Alpes

Iisdem procubuit campis,

De bello Get. *sub fin.*

astonished and terrified the most distant and most flourishing nations.

When we reflect on the ridiculous positions which the dissertator wishes to establish with regard to the Celts; that all those nations of that description which had formerly extended over Europe, were long before the time of Cæsar, compressed within no larger a compass than that of a trifling district of Transalpine Gaul; that in his age they were confined within "the LOIRE," the Seine and the Marne:* that these Celts were of such a class of beings, that they could not possibly make any progress in ideas or in society; and that they were entirely devoid of every virtue, while they were stained with almost every vice incident to humanity;—when we advert to the preposterous, the absurd nature of such positions, it will be difficult to conjecture the source from which they proceeded. It has been supposed, that as human nature is so inclinable to extremes, our author contracted this singular bias, from a dislike to the prejudices of the great historian of the Celts,† who has in different and material points, erred on the contrary side, but who should not have been treated with that abuse which the dissertator so plentifully bestows on him. Whether he has not delineated himself in the character which he gives of Pelloutier, when the obvious alterations for contrariety of sentiments are made, is submitted to the judgment of the reader. In his characteristic virulence, in his wild exuberance of unqualified obloquy, and in that licen-

tious

* p. 84.

† And perhaps (the doctrine of savage *races* in particular) from a very remarkable species of religious infidelity, not less singular in its kind, than the *antipathy* to the Celts.—"Their rejection of a religion so unsuited to their heads and hearts," says an ingenious and most amiable writer, "supplies, if I mistake not, a pretty strong argument for its truth, as well as for its excellency." See Beattie's Evidences, &c.

tious and unbridled scurrility which soars far beyond the limits of vulgar petulence, I certainly shall not attempt to be his rival, but when our differtator so uniformly bids defiance to common politeness, and to every appearance of common decency, he should not be displeased to find that he is measured by a standard which he himself has created.*

“ His over-heated imagination saw the Celts
 “ every where; though if he could have *under-*
 “ *stood* the first page of Cæsar, he might have
 “ learned, that in his time they held but one
 “ third part of Gaul. Weakness is excusable;
 “ but truth must not be sacrificed for falsehood:
 “ and his suppression of ALL the evidence re-
 “ lating to the Scythæ, is most illaudable. In-
 “ deed he ALWAYS suppresses what he cannot
 “ answer; a plan very easy and very common.
 “ —But it may boldly be said, that he, who in
 “ treating history, the grand instruction of man-
 “ kind, does not place the evidence against, as
 “ well as for, before his readers, he is a propa-
 “ gator of falsehood, and an enemy to society.”†

His zeal for the interest of truth, very commonly blazes out in the same vehemence of language, and he uniformly applies to those writers who may have entertained opposite sentiments, a torrent of similar abuse. His disgust at their *insanity* and nonsense, is unbounded; the “pillory”† he thinks the just desert of their prevarication and literary depravity; and language sinks under the effects which he makes to shew his rooted detestation of their prejudices. Yet is this modern Damasippus equally reprehensible for the manner in which he has thought proper to conduct his researches, for his weak

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and

* P. 105.

See *ao* pref. p. xiv. where the elegant terms—*liar*, *scoundrel*, *infamous*, &c.—are dealt out in profusion to those guilty of the highest species of literary crime, misquotation.

† Vol. I. p. 241.

and flimsy declamation, and his peremptory and scurrilous mode of bringing forward and supporting the most unfounded and paradoxical positions: He is equally culpable for that neglect of the ancients, and that contempt of the most explicit authorities, which he every where considers as the disgrace of his predecessors; and he is still more reprehensible, when we regard the boasted veneration, the respect approaching to idolatry, for the writers of antiquity, which he uniformly professes, and which he considers as peculiarly his pride: With respect to his prejudices, he is more inexcusable in proportion, as the history of Europe is more important than that of a trivial and mountainous district;* and the censure which is his due, should exceed that which he has extended to his fellow antiquarians, as far as the *Amor Patriæ*, surpasses the despicable principle by which he has been guided.

The faults of our dissertator may be readily traced to the dogmatic singularity which he has affected, to the force of these unworthy and ridiculous prejudices, and to the crude state of his materials for literary researches. His prejudices, as inimical to the figures of the Memory, as “the beams of fancy,” communicate to every argument, and every authority, such a tinge as is requisite to suit them to his purpose; his peremptory assertions impart a seemingly immovable stability, to whatever singularities his prejudices incline him to promulge; and working upon a fund of extensive, but indigested reading,† it is not wonderful that he should afford

* The Gaelic part of Scotland.

† “This is that which I think great readers are apt to be mistaken in. Those who have read of every thing, are thought to understand every thing too; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge, ’tis thinking

afford such striking instances of preposterous reasoning, wild paradox, and flagrant literary perversion.*

The meanest instrument is capable of producing effects of the most alarming nature, and in such circumstances, it will naturally excite such a degree of general attention, as to confer a sort of importance on the cause, however insignificant in itself. But when, as in the present case, the comprehensive fabric of ancient history is thus boldly attacked in its foundation, and when paradoxical assertions, in opposition to every authority, are thus boldly brought forward to support the attack, by a writer, whose talents, and whose acquired information are truly respectable, it is not surprizing that his consequence should be too highly estimated by the generality of readers, who are induced by his professions of impartiality, and his supposed veneration for the testimonies of ancient writers, to rely with implicit confidence on whatever facts, and whatever consequent inferences he may think proper to impute to these unbiaſſed guides.

“ *thinking* makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and tis not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections; unless we chew them over again, they will not give us strength and nourishment.” Locke, *Conduct of the Understanding*.

* Should it be said that I bear too severely on this scurrilous and paradoxical writer, I must request that the charge be not allowed until my accusers shall have *completely* gone through the torrent of unconcatenated ideas, of idle *whimsies*, and shocking abuse, which in different passages for pages together, Vol. I. p. 122—160, Vol. II. p. 10—25, 51—59, 73—86, flows unrestrained. Such scandalous and wretched *stuff*, would be an almost irreparable disgrace to the most exalted abilities. Indeed the faults which I have pointed out as peculiarly prominent in these extracts, are by no means compressed within these limits; since it has not been without lapsing into not a few strange notions and self-contradictions, that this writer has succeeded in ascertaining a number of valuable truths, and in detecting many inveterate errors.

guides. Hence the merit of his productions, though replete in many parts with judicious remark and acute investigation, has been perhaps too highly overrated, and he has found means to communicate to the public, no small portion of that assurance of his own superior importance, of which he appears to entertain so clear a conviction. So complete indeed is this conviction, that he seems to expect from all his cotemporaries, a tribute of respectful veneration, a tribute, which *at present* they are not unwilling to grant. What Johnson observed of another great writer, is however peculiarly applicable to him, and merits his serious consideration: "When I
" read Warburton first, and observed his force
" and his contempt of mankind, I thought he
" had driven the world before him; but I soon
" found that was not the case; for Warburton,
" by extending his abuse, rendered it ineffec-
" tual."

T H E * E N D.

N O T E S

T O T H E

ANALYSIS OF THE ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND.

NOTE A.—page 5.

TH E unwarrantable use which too many modern antiquaries make of **ETYMOLOGY**, by the wonderful influence of which successive systems are exhibited to view, and immediately after are dissipated, cannot be too much or too severely reprobated. It were exceedingly desirable that this trifling, and at the same time, highly injurious and improper mode of conducting historical disquisition, should be wholly discarded, and that the labours of a Whitaker, an O'Connor, and a Beauford, should not be in future depreciated by the introduction of such altercation as they have been heretofore accustomed to admit. Did these ingenious writers but consider the uncertainty of the most plausible conjectures, the room which is always left for the opposite **OPINIONS** of different glossologists, which must be tinged with the prejudices of those by whom they are advanced, and the little need there is for introducing such superfluous and indecisive support, I cannot but think that they would be much more sparing in the display of their skill and acuteness in etymological disquisition. Has there ever been any controversy which was decided by an appeal to an etymon thus produced? Does not every writer find one which will favour his own hypothesis? Have we ever seen an instance of an antiquary advancing an etymon which was hostile to his own opinions, and

and yielding to conviction from the supposed justice of his discovery ?

Etymology of this sort is at farthest but *CONJECTURE*, and a *CERTAIN CONJECTURE* is an obvious contradiction. Nor less obvious is the incongruity of building *HISTORY* on the basis of *OPINION*. Such, however, are the *historical* accounts of the origin and peculiar habits of the Scots, the Caledonians, the Gaul, the Celts, and many others, of which it is only to be regretted, that the various systems should be at once so plausible, and so irreconcilably discordant.

Such conjectures when they affect subjects of importance, are soon opposed by others of a different tendency. But when they relate to a point of inferior consideration, they sometimes acquire more general currency. This is partly the case with the etymon of *London*. *London*, it is generally allowed, is a composition of two Gothic words, the import of which is, *a town in a wood*. Every British town must therefore have been a *London*, because all the *towns* of the Britons answered this description. And how a *sentence* descriptive of *circumstances* common to these retreats of the various tribes should be applied exclusively to *one*, for the purpose of *distinguishing* it from all the rest, is a point, which I find great difficulty to conceive.

Among the numerous instances of similar errors on this subject, I shall only instance those which are so profusely lavished in the notes to the translation of *Osian*. In these, with the bare names of the personages introduced, we are presented with a concise and faithfully descriptive sketch of their various characters ; we discover the virtue or the vice by which each was distinguished, and the peculiar art in which each particularly excelled. And yet these names, so accurately characteristic, were given in the very first stage of infancy and existence. Would not one be led to suppose that the Druids, if at that time there had been Druids, were exclusively concerned in what is so entirely within the precincts of prophecy ?

The learned Pinkerton has at great length, and in different passages, inveighed against the "frenzy" and "lunacy" of those antiquarians, who are addicted to such pursuits. Of him however it may be said in this, as well as not in a few other instances, that he indulges himself to a great latitude in that which he so forcibly and vehemently rejects. I shall here take the liberty of referring to the sensible and very deserved per-
 striction of his work, which is inserted in the Monthly Review, as
 it

it contains some judicious remarks on the present subject. Yet even these are sometimes liable to exception, through the *practice* of etymologists, who would wish to confer additional strength on a favourite hypothesis. Of this the derivation of *Kill-kenny*, which has been advanced by a learned antiquary, is a striking example.

NOTE B.—page 19

A modern antiquary, who (in his dissertation on the origin &c. of the Scythians) loads with a torrent of obloquy almost every writer on such subjects, and who charges them with being *insane* and *nonsensical* on every point which he may conceive to be an error in judgment, is as forward as those whom he condemns in building historic systems on such unstable foundations. In discriminating the grand divisions and families of mankind, he thinks that evidence sufficient, which another less dogmatic, and more attentive to reasoning than prone to advance peremptory assertions, would regard as the most fantastic and trifling. Who, except himself, would suppose, that the Sarmatæ were not Scythians, BECAUSE the former “LIVED ALWAYS ON HORSEBACK,” (p. 151.) and their families in CARS, while the Germans had fixed huts; (p. 70.) though cars were PECULIARLY Scythic, in which respect they were LIKE (p. 153.) the Sarmatæ, notwithstanding that among the Sarmatæ “NO CARS are to be found.”—(p. 70.) Who would reckon this a grand feature in the appropriate and discriminative description of a race of men extended through regions so remote, in circumstances so diametrically different, and by no means unfrequently engaged in mutual hostilities, and divided by national animosity? Yet this is fathered on “the acute and transcendent mind of Tacitus.” And who is there with even a far less veneration for the ancients than this writer professes, that would oppose the testimonies, direct and explicit as they could possibly be expressed, of every writer* who has deduced the Parthians from the Scythians, and would oppose them merely, because they wore a loose dress, while that “grand BADGE of the Scythæ,” as he calls it, the *braccæ*, were worn by their neighbours the Persians? The proneness of this writer to contradiction and paradoxical assertion has, in this instance, as well as in countless others of the same sort, so effectually

* Pliny VI. 25.—Justin II. 3. more particularly XLI. 1.—Quint. Curt. VI. 5.—Seph. Byz.—Arrian apud Phot.—Eustath ad Dionys. Perieg, &c.

fectually prevented him from attending to the most palpable facts, that he has involved himself in a net of self-refutation and error. It has prevented him from recollecting that the *braccæ* were diffused among the western Scythæ in proportion to the diffusion among them of Roman arts and refinement; and it has also prevented him from remembering that the Romans, (themselves a Scythic people) in the vicissitude of events, reassumed this long-forgotten national *badge*, and that they reassumed it, merely as a refinement in luxury. To this cause also it is owing that he has forgotten that this *grand badge* of the Scythians, these *braccæ*, were really Sarmatian. For the Medes were, confessedly, a Sarmatic people, and the dress which was adopted by the Persians, and called by their name, was borrowed from the Medes. (Strab. XI. 525.) This argument therefore which is reckoned by our author to be of such force, as to overthrow the direct testimonies of different ancient writers unanimously agreeing with each other, we must suppose he will extend yet further, and that he will by means of it, identify the Scythians and Sarmatæ. For offering to do this, there is however poured on the author of the "Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland," a foul torrent of abuse.* To all this he has therefore rendered himself obnoxious, by his own judgment, and he must *doubt* deplore a situation which he has so PATHETICALLY and with such ELEGANCE described. (Dissert. p. 93) Yet, as he observes of another, "the high and contemptuous manner in which he treats others, annuls all favour,"—nor should he expect that the self-inflicted wound, deep as it is, should excite very general commiseration.

Such are the consequences to general history of this sort of trifling and flimsy disquisition, which plainly involves together truth and error, and which when it is thus capable of perplexing the clearest circumstances, must surely be wholly inadmissible as a guide for directing us in an examination of unknown or embarrassed subjects. This mode of conducting antiquarian researches was formerly much in use; but so obvious, and of such

* Though supported by Procopius, whose *authority* the dissertator disallows; and though he might have farther alleged the testimony of Pliny, which our author (notwithstanding he avers Procopius to be the *SOLE* authority) mentions and sets aside; and likewise the "*QUIDAM credidere*" of Quintus Curtius, (VII. 27.) whom he does not at all *condescend* on." So much for the ancient knowledge of barbarous nations, and the congruity of ancient testimony! The moderns, Bayer and Gebelin do not, on this subject, seem averse to tread in their footsteps.

such importance were the ill consequences which resulted from it, that we might expect to have seen it wholly exploded. A revival of the cause will certainly produce a repetition of these consequences, and it should therefore be fairly exposed in its genuine light; and particularly so, when we are engaged in such an enquiry as the present, because we should fully exhibit, not only the stability of the ground on which we proceed, but also the imperfection of the foundation which we reject. Without attaining such a full view of the subject, it would be impossible to form a right estimate of the conclusions to be raised on so exceptionable a basis.

NOTE C.—page 35.

It is not a little remarkable, and it deserves to be noticed as confirmative of what I have advanced, that the Oriental manner of treating their sacred fire was not uniformly the same, and that in this point it was not so fixed as to preclude any advantageous alteration which experience might suggest. That the Magi in the purity of their system, performed their rites in the open air I do not dispute: but it is to be remembered that a conspicuous innovation among those introduced by their celebrated prophet, was the building of "Pyraea," in order that the fire which, before, its worshippers were used to burn on the tops of mountains and other elevated situations, might be preserved from being occasionally extinguished by the various accidents consequent to such an exposed situation. To enforce this regulation Zoroaster ordered these Pyraea to be erected wherever he came; and it is evident that inclosures of great compass of which Strabo speaks, in the middle of which were altars * on which the Magi preserved a perpetual fire, were very different from the buildings calculated to preserve this fire from being accidentally extinguished. These inclosures obtained, we may well suppose, before the age of Zoroaster: to remedy the inconveniencies to which his disciples were exposed, from this manner of treating their fire, the edifices were built which secured it from the inconveniency of the weather. Such was the alteration introduced by the prophet of the Magi: that he established any model for the construction of these edifices, is so far from being certain, that we find his modern disciples have copied in this point from Mahometan and Christian Archetypes. And surely those whose principles were the same, but whose communication with these professors was cut

* Yet Herodotus observes (l. 113.) that they had no altars: so progressive were they in these innovations.

cut off by change of residence, might be at liberty, in a matter so discretionary, in an affair of convenience, (convenient in one climate, indispensable in the other) to introduce such alterations as caprice, or difference of opinion, or peculiarity of circumstances might suggest.

What has been already observed, on this subject, will perhaps be allowed still greater weight when it is considered that the Irish were actually in the practice of paying particular honours to that element which the Magi so highly revered. Of this assertion no other evidence need be given than the vestige of the superstition in question, which (with many others we may suppose long since lost, and with not a few still distinctly to be traced) subsisted for several centuries subsequent to the introduction of Christianity, and which is noticed by Cambrensis. (*Topog. Hib.* dist. 2. c. 34, &c.)

The learned Ledwich who has devoted several pages to a detail of the opinions of Cambrensis, Lynch, Walsh, and Molyneux (*Antiquities of Ireland*, p. 284.—289.) has produced scarcely any observation which has not already been frequently noticed. The validity of these opinions, is already, (I presume) annihilated by the remarks which I have introduced in page 35, and which were introduced before this number of the “*Antiquities*” had reached my hands.

“The Oistmen began these towers, and they were imitated by the Irish” says the learned Gentleman; and this he says notwithstanding he would infer that “Cambrensis saw the Irish in the very act of building these towers.” At what time the incorporation, of which he speaks, began to prevail, would be a curious problem, since it is a most incontestible and indubitable historic fact, that but a few years before the arrival of Cambrensis, the Irish utterly disclaimed stone and lime edifices, (stone and lime churches are particularly in question on this occasion) of any kind whatsoever.—One of these belfries stands 120 feet, others are 90, from the buildings to which they belong; some of them are 110, one in particular 130 feet in height; and there still remain 65 of these appendages (see *Antiquities*, p. 300—304) while the *original* timber or clay structures to which they belonged are vanished. This singular people, it seems, could construct a palace, though wholly inadequate to the task of building the out-offices. The magic of the Oistmen gave them the power of shewing their dexterity in
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the former line, and of shewing it in an amazing number of Instances : the more simple art, they entirely with-held, as well by the bands of that species of ignorance which produces astonishment, as by the forcible ties of inveterate prejudice.

The variety of *opinion* is certainly unlimited : but if reason be not the standard to which such conjectures should be referred, if the canons of antiquarian disquisition enjoin its votaries wantonly to set at defiance the plain dictates of common sense, we need not be surprized to find the number of extravagant suppositions encrease ; and erudition may continue to be employed with the success which deservedly awaits the efforts of learning untempered with judgment. On such principles, it matters little what is the conjecture, if it possess the merit of extravagance ; these edifices are in themselves singular, and the hypothesis to which they may give rise, may be proportionably curious ; and, what room have we for astonishment if we should be gravely informed that such a species of structures was originally calculated for the retreat of an anachoret, the appendage of a mudwalled and miserable ecclesiastical edifice, the monument of a chieftain, the sanctuary for criminals, or the occasional refuge of an oppressed roydamna ?

NOTE D.—page 43.

Among the many groundless notions, the numerous refined comparisons of things totally dissimilar, which may be traced in the records of antiquarian whimsy, may with justice be ranked the connection between the Britons and Greeks, a point which has been laboured by some of the penetrating and accurate writers who have treated the subject of British Antiquities. These accurate writers would even go so far as to establish a resemblance, and not a faint one, between the superstitious tenets and solemnities of the Britons and the Grecian Mythology. In receiving at the hands of a learned and judicious French Academician, the Abbé Melot, a formal refutation of these unfounded opinions, these gentlemen have been too highly honoured. The ingenious Abbé, in some dissertations on the subject, in the *Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions*, has at considerable length exposed the futility of their system ; and he has with much learning demonstrated that no such connection

nexion can be traced. On the subject of a common religion, or a close resemblance in religious, tenets, and rites, he establishes as a criterion, by which this is to be ascertained, not a superficial resemblance in the great and leading points which in every system of this kind may be regarded as fundamental, but "an IDENTITY in the systems peculiar to the two nations in question, or at least—some peculiarity in doctrines; in worship, in the priesthood, different from the common system of polytheism." With respect to the subject on which he is engaged, no one, he observes, "would ever attempt to prove the former point: and he can observe in each of the three latter divisions of the question, exclusively of the indicative resemblance already noticed, nothing but essential differences." This I cite, because I am of opinion, and my opinion is in unison with the general voice of those antiquarians and mythologists who have had the opportunity of examining the subject, that the principles and ceremonies of the Druids when compared, as far as the fragments now remaining and the notices of cotemporary writers will permit, with those of the Magi, will not shrink from a trial on even the former ground; on that of a minute resemblance they will challenge the scrutiny of every intelligent inquirer.

The doctrines of Zoroaster were much corrupted by the polytheism of the neighbouring nations; and systems so extremely different as the simple doctrines of the Magi and the prevalent complex mythology of the votaries of a more groveling superstition, being blended together, formed one more adapted to the genius of the vulgar, and perhaps also of their superiors. This corrupted system which to a degree prevailed at times even in Persia itself, and which was established to a much greater latitude among the adjacent nations, appears to be that which obtained among the Druids. Ireland still retains several fragments of this ancient superstition, and what is here to be collected must be regarded as *more* indisputably genuine than those remains which may be collected in Britain or in Gaul: the reason of this assertion is simply this; the original system, here flourishing in its vigour, superseded in a more partial degree, and in a degree proportioned in some measure to the distance, the primæval superstitions of the neighbouring nations. Upon the whole, in all the great leading points of their mythology, these two systems professed by nations so widely

widely separated, were the same; in their whimsical ceremonies and tenets, a similar identity will be recognized; and even at this late period, do the Irish pay annual honours to Belus, by burning fires which actually bear his name.

NOTE E,—page 46.

The testimony of Solinus on this subject will doubtless much disconcert this learned gentleman. “*Infamantur veneni periculo, ritu incolarum, (Galliæ Scil.) qui ut aiunt, (veri enim periculum non ad me recipio) detestabili sacrorum ritu non ad honorem, sed potius, ad injuriam religionis, humanis litant hostiis.*”—Polyhist. §. 24. I must, however, in my own defence, take the liberty of repeating the words of Solinus—*veri periculum non ad me recipio.*

NOTE F —page 47.

This singularly opiated author, whose professed attachment to ancient authorities is more implicit, and whose “utter” rejection of their testimonies is more general than we can meet with in any other instance, peremptorily confines the institution of Druidism within such limits as never occurred to any writer besides himself. To examine the various testimonies which might be brought to confute his magisterial *assertions* were superfluous in this place, and would require too much room, as the clearest passages will not be admitted in their proper meaning, whenever they are so unfortunate as to militate against his prepossessions. The authority of Strabo (lib. iv. 197.) is therefore the only one which I shall cite as entirely subversive of the historic innovation which he attempts to introduce: And he is the more inexcusable in opposing or passing in silence this authority, because that geographer, immediately before the passage in which he extends Druidism among *all the Gauls*, had occasion to mention the Belgic Gauls last, and immediately before those general descriptions which he applies to the whole, and of which the account of this institution makes a part.

A writer who professes to have perused every author on the subject, and who disclaims all prejudice, all private opinion, who, in short, forms his historic system on the information of those authorities which he has so carefully consulted, is totally
inexcusable,

inexcusable, when thus detected, not only in insisting on the most singular innovations, (which must be referred to private prejudice) but in supporting them by a violent opposition to those authorities with which he cannot be unacquainted, though he thinks proper to deny them existence, or to pass them in silence.

NOTE G.—page 53.

The reader is referred for a further confirmation of this reasoning to the fifth section of Dr. Campbell's strictures. It were almost superfluous to observe, that though the mysteries which were studied by the Druids, and the rites which that body practised, could not have been introduced from the remote country in which the institution originated, through the medium of ignorant and ill-informed traders, in the course of their transient visits, yet when once they had secured the proper establishment, they might with less difficulty have been extended through adjacent countries, which maintained with each other a mutual and close connexion. Accordingly we find, that Gaul derived its acquaintance with this singular institution from Britain, in the same manner perhaps as Britain had done from Ireland. In the progress of events, *some* of its tenets may have been admitted by those German tribes who bordered on Gaul; and hence we may reconcile the seemingly discordant testimonies of Cæsar and Tacitus.—See *Masou's Germany*, B. ii. §. 36.—*Percy's pref. to Mallet*, p. 14.

Pursuing this line of inquiry, we might expect that the Britons should be found to possess more of the regulations and ceremonies established by the Druids, than could be discovered in Gaul. Accordingly we find that this was actually the case. (Cæsar, *bell. Gall.* v. 10.) Yet were the Britons the same with the Gauls: if there were Celts in Gaul, there were also nations of the same people in Britain, and if there were Germans on the continent, there were likewise various tribes of the same extraction in the adjacent island. We have then evidence, that the extension of Druidism was thus *progressive*; and the variety of its remains still subsisting in Ireland, which is greater than that to be discovered in Britain, shews that the fountain of the institution must be traced thither.

An institution, which from indubitable authorities we clearly evince to have SUPERSEDED the superstitions of the neighbouring

ing nations, must be referred to a LATER origin, and to causes different from those, from which barbarous superstition primarily takes its rise. This institution likewise, since it superseded another, was different from that other, and must have been of a PECULIAR nature: And in order so powerfully to attract the notice of the neighbouring nations, as to induce them to adopt it in different proportions, according to their vicinity or remoteness, it must have also been of a nature no less EXTRAORDINARY than it was singular.

Whence then are we to deduce, how are we to account for the peculiar rise of this extraordinary institution, which not only banished the Celtic and Gothic superstition, or at least greatly altered them in the country where it first obtained, but which also spread its influence in a greater or lesser degree to the adjacent tribes of the same extraction?—It evidently appears to have been PLANTED here at some particular period; but to what origin must it be referred?

Let a similarity approaching to identity be permitted to decide.

Should this induction of particulars be peremptorily and without examination rejected, should it be observed that Druidism was not only the religion which was originally and commonly prevalent among the Celtic nations, but that it was also, in a great measure, the religion of every barbarous people in similar circumstances; yet even on this ground are we prepared to contend. If, as it is thus asserted, Druidism was the religion of the *Celtæ*, it must have flourished not only in Britain and Gaul, but even in Spain and Italy; for Spain was peopled by Celts, and in Italy the possessions of the Gauls were extensive. And who is there that does not know, that not a trace of it was discoverable among these nations? Do not the Romans and the later Greeks at once recognize it as a system confined to the former countries; and do they not from the tenor of their observations, as well as from their general silence with regard to its further extension, clearly evince that it was an institution confined to one branch, while it was unknown to the remaining division of the *Celtæ*? Can any authority be produced to shew that Gallic and Druidic, or superstitions similar to Druidic, were of necessity connected? And on the contrary, does not the concurrent evidence of antiquity

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prove,

prove, that it was a particular and detached institution, a system equally singular and unknown beyond certain limits?

That the religion of the whole body of the Celts was at one period the same, as well as their manners and language, is pretty evident. The question then recurs concerning the cause from which proceeded this remarkable dissimilarity, and concerning the origin of such a particular system; and thus we arrive at the same conclusion as before, without the necessity of entering into the detail of such a succession of particulars. This detail, it may further be observed, will be useful in filling up the outlines of the more general, though not less decisive conclusions, and for directing to a solution of the important questions to which it will conduct.

NOTE H.—page 63.

Candor seems to have required that this expression should have been more guarded; because the intent of the Colonel's investigation was solely to shew, that the Punic had an affinity with the *Irish* tongue, nor does his design appear to have been at first carried any further. Since this period, indeed, our glossologist has been engaged in the attempt (if I am not mistaken with regard to the Colonel's opinions, as from their embarrassed state, I probably may) to make the Gothic, Celtic, Persian, Assyrian, Tartar, and (I believe) Chinese and Indian languages originally the same. The grand point of separation, or *point de pontage*, of the extensive nation, which by different routes moved forward to occupy the western regions of Europe, was, according to him, the Caspian Sea. The dialect of the Celts who moved westward must, in a course of years, have materially differed from that spoken by the Scythians (Celts also) who were settled in the south of Asia. Still, however, as the ground-work was the same, some vestiges, we are told, of a common origin are to be traced. A colony of these southern Scythians (whose language was *Punic*) having moved into *Britain* and Ireland, the dialect which they introduced had a few words, which were the same with others in the Celtic, spoken by those adventurers by whom they were *dispossessed* of the *greater* island, and were all collected into the more western.

western. This I take to be the system of the learned glossologist, nor am I conscious of having in any one particular, misrepresented it. The issue of the whole is, that the Welch had a few terms similar in sound to others of a similar import in the Punic, while, in the Irish, most of the words are to be traced to that origin. In the former instance, the reveries of the glossologist are apparent: in the latter, after making every abatement which a similar reason may require, there will remain a remarkable affinity for which we are to account.

NOTE I.—page 65.

“ Est et elegans imprimis et opulenta,” (Usser. epist. &c. 486.) is a testimony in favour of the Irish language, which could not escape the diligence of its modern panegyrists.

From the former of these encomiums, these writers would deduce conclusions of no inconsiderable importance in the present disquisition. They would wish to persuade us that the *superlative* merit of the Irish tongue plainly evinces that it was spoken by an enlightened and polished people, by whom it was refined to a degree which would justify the highest strains of commendation: And hence they would take occasion to reconcile us to the lofty notions which they entertain of Milesian wisdom and grandeur. We are willing to grant to the conclusion all the consideration which the premises can claim; and when the system of Lord Monboddo shall be completely established, we shall certainly afford our antiquarians a similar proof of our candour, in espousing opinions which we have been used to condemn. It is not, in fact, in the power of any people *thus* to modulate their language at the will of its philosophers; to render it, at their command, musical and soft; and to furnish it, at the pleasure of glossologists, with any of the various abbreviations, by which its leading terms, or principal parts of speech, are said to be infected.

Copiousness we may naturally suppose to be a distinguishing characteristic of the Irish language, a language which is to be referred to such different sources. It abounds in synonyma, we are told, to a surprising degree, there being no less than forty

terms to express the various modifications of ship, and nearly as many for the different sorts of house, &c. In such a language, which has been also much subject to variation, on account of its not being sufficiently ascertained, the etymologist has a very large field for discovering fanciful and trifling analogies; nor has this field remained untrodden. It is to be regretted, that such a mode of refining on language should have been so long continued, to the prejudice of accurate and judicious attempts on a different plan, and of a very different nature.

As the Irish language is reducible to the Celtic, of which it originally and exclusively consisted, it is not difficult to account for the collations which have been made with such success, with what is termed, the pure Celtic. The same observation may be extended to the like successful collation with the Punic. And it may be presumed, that the event of a collation with the Gothic would be proportionably similar. By selecting, for the purpose of such a collation with a particular tongue, those terms in the Irish which were derived from that tongue, the task is easily completed. Perhaps the same would take place by collating the English with the Tudesque, and the Latin or French respectively. Hence is evident, the error of that singular inference which would conclude, that every language to which the Irish may be supposed to bear an affinity, is reducible to the same common origin.

Another observation will conclude this note; and this observation is directed to such as affect to consider the Irish as a bare specimen of the Celtic, similar in every respect to the Welsh; and to such who would wish by a sneer to evade any consideration respecting other sources of the Irish, than those which were accessible to the latter. To these I shall oppose the judgment of the judicious and learned Dr. Percy, who has taken considerable pains in making collations of the various European languages, and who has shewn such judgment in discriminating between them, and marking the respective differences which appeared from a deliberate attention.—After distinguishing between the various dialects of the Teutonic, and after proving that they are all to be traced to one common origin, he comes to the Celtic, upon which he observes, that “in conformity to the opinion of the most knowing antiqua-
rians,

“rians, I have given the Irish and Erse tongues as descended
 “from one common original with the Cambrian, or ancient
 “British languages, viz. the Welsh, Armoric, and Cornish,”
 the only other remains of the Celtic, by which to judge of the
 Irish.—“But to confess my own opinion, I cannot think they
 “are equally derived from one common Celtic stock; at least
 “not in the same uniform manner as any other two branches
 “of the Gothic; such for instance as the Anglo-Saxon and
 “Francic, from the old Teutonic. Upon comparing the two
 “ancient specimens given above, SCARCE ANY RESEM-
 “BLANCE appears between them; so that if the learned will
 “have them to be streams from one common fountain, it must
 “be allowed that one or both of them have been greatly polluted
 “in their course, and received large inlets from some other
 “channel.”—*Pref. to Mallet, p. 41,*

NOTE K.—page 67.

Of the Cumri there appear to be several remains in Ireland. Colonel Vallancey notices the name of a village in the county of Waterford, which bears the name of Bally-Cumraeg. But they have left a more distinct trace than this in the appellation of the Cummeragh Mountains, by which the face of that country is rendered so rugged. The most timid etymologist need not scruple to identify the names.

It may not be improper in this place to notice a sort of objection to this, and indeed applicable to all rational schemes of the early population of Ireland. Ireland, we are told, was by the ancients denominated a British island, and hence, it is to be inferred, that it was peopled (exclusively we must suppose) from Britain. Let us ask the writer who has advanced this objection, whether judging from analogy, from the general name of the range of West India Islands for instance, he can discover any thing which would favour the singular inference which he has ventured to adduce? The name of British I cannot discover to have any reference to *population* in particular, or that it was extended to Ireland, *because* it was peopled from Britain. Surely vicinity is a much more probable reason.

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NOTE L.—page 68.

There were, it is true, Cangi or Cangani in several parts of Britain ; (see Camden, and Horsley, 31, 34.) but though I do not subscribe to the conjecture of Baxter (Gloss. p. 73.) on the subject, yet I do not think that a people, situated as were the Irish Cangani, are to be derived from the neighbouring island. Richard, indeed, gives them this origin ; but to his *authority* much weight will not be allowed. Their situation with relation to Spain, and their being in the neighbourhood of several tribes in this island, whose names are to be found on the opposite coasts of that country in the same circumstances of proximity, decide in favour of a contrary hypothesis.

In launching into the field of conjecture, so far as to make the *Vodii* and the *Varduli* approximate, I may be supposed to weaken the force of what has been advanced on this point. The only difference, that of the letter *r*, and the corruptness of Ptolomy's text, will be my apology for mentioning such a similarity. Of this however the reader will dispose as he thinks proper.

 NOTE M.—page 69.

Between the circumstances affecting the collation of the Irish with the Basque and that of the same tongue with the Punic, there must be observed the following differences. 1. We have no remain of the Basque, comparable in point of Antiquity, with that of the Punic of Plautus : this point is not perhaps materially important. 2. The migration of a people of the same extraction with this oriental nation, was accomplished at a more early period, when the Island was very thinly inhabited, so that these emigrants mixed and incorporated with the natives, and when population increased, their proportion to the ancient settlers was equal or at least considerable : while the Iberian colony removed in a later age, when the Island was more fully occupied, so that their number were very disproportionate to those whom they found settled here before them, and instead of being sufficiently considerable to mix with the nation

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at large, they were reduced to occupy a separate district in the extreme angle of the Island. 3. The consequence was that the language of the former colony was incorporated with that of the original settlers, and bore to it a very considerable proportion: that, on the contrary, spoken by the latter could not be thus incorporated, because it was entirely unknown to the whole nation, excepting the few tribes on whom these colonists bordered; and at most, it would probably make but a trifling variation in a provincial dialect.

I have already observed that Lloyd would perhaps have scarcely proceeded to such length in his etymological disquisitions concerning the affinity of the Irish and Iberian tongues, had he not been invited by some little opening which seemed to favour his purpose. I have now to remark, as a highly probable conjecture, that he was still further, and more earnestly desirous of evincing such an affinity, as would, were it successful, solve in a satisfactory manner a question by which he appears to have been not a little embarrassed, I mean the question respecting the obvious difference to be observed between the Welsh and Irish languages, notwithstanding they were originally the same. That they possess much in common, that they both bear evident marks of primæval identity is not to be denied. To shew why they do not and why they anciently did not resemble each other in the same manner as will two Gothic dialects spoken by nations, *in every respect similarly circumstanced* is however a problem not to be clearly solved by the supposition of the Celts, being distributed into two grand nations, to which the Welsh and the Irish are respectively to be traced. The Roman and Greek tongues are undoubtedly different from the Teuonic; but they were spoken by people in circumstances remarkably dissimilar. On the other hand there is no such distinction between the Scandivavian and the Tudesque; nor is the like extensive difference to be observed between the modern dialects of these languages, except where it can be accounted for with the requisite precision. To account for the difference between the Irish and the Welsh upon similar grounds, I suppose Lloyd was induced to have recourse to the Iberian language, which was in a great measure unfit for his purpose; a
circumstance

circumstance this which evinces his perplexity (sufficiently apparent indeed) with respect to the events which occasioned a diversity so singularly remarkable. See note, I, page 243.

NOTE N—page 78.

Pliny speaks from the authority of Varro of Persians as being settlers in Spain. This has not a little perplexed some writers. And yet Pliny gives us room for solving this point by informing us (V. 8) that these Persians were Pharisi, a people in Africa, as well as in Spain, not unfrequently mentioned. Their traditions with respect to Hercules are the same with these of their eastern neighbours, with whom they were connected at home, and whom they appear to have accompanied in their migration. They were not, as their language evinces the Hibernian colonists.

NOTE O.—page 78.

With respect to the language of these African settlers, as it refers to the Oriental tongues, I am an incompetent witness; and the resemblance has been controverted. But as far as I can judge, the point appears to be settled in the affirmative by Dr. Swinton, Arabic professor at Oxford (Universal hist. Vol. XVII. p. 415. 8vo.) who maintains that it is clearly reducible to an Oriental source, and that it bears to the Arabic a manifest resemblance.

NOTE P.—page 79.

Doctor Campbell furnishes a proof, how much this resemblance in these traditions must strike an unbiassed observer, free from the shackles of System. Even as they are compared in the dissertations of O'Connor, by whom the parallel has not, it must be confessed, been exhibited to the greatest advantage, or with the highest pretensions to accuracy, he gives an opinion of
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of them which must furnish a contrast, not wholly to be forgotten, with opinions more recently adopted from a different view of the subject.

“ O’Conor who has published some ingenious dissertations upon the history of Ireland, brings a new reinforcement of arguments from Newton’s Chronology, which *wonderfully* corroborate this matter. He gives you a table where in one view, you may see the coincidence of the Irish accounts, with the Newtonian amendment. The parallel is *very striking*.”—*Philosophical survey*, p. 68.

The only place in which (as I recollect) any thing alluding to this parallel is referred to in the “*Strictures*” is at p. 153. where the subject is scarcely hinted at, and is passed over without further notice. And yet as there is nothing produced without a cause, it might have been somewhat pertinent to have introduced some enquiry into the reason of this “*very striking*” conformity, to the exclusion indeed of the threadbare assertion, the mere *ipse dixit*, which would, without foundation, and for the purpose of giving countenance to a system, refer the introduction of such names, indeed such *passages* from foreign writers for the sake of decorating a forgery. This is the spot on which our antiquarians would raise the machinery that would demolish the whole of the inimical edifice: and indeed this spot they seem to occupy for that purpose, without any nice examination how far they are entitled to the use of it.

Perhaps, however this gentleman, so vehement in his zeal against the errors of others, so silent with regard to his own, may now (such is the effect of a settled adherence to principles in which the mind has finally acquiesced) be unable to perceive that conformity, which formerly could strike him with such irresistible force.

NOTE Q.—page 80.

The origin of the appellation of Scotia as applied to Ireland, seems to be determined with much precision and accuracy by the learned Ledwich in his “*Antiquities of Ireland*.” But this deduction of the name may be easily reconciled with the history of the Irish, and with the accounts which they maintain

tain of their origin. We are told by dull annalists of the high antiquity of the Scottish name, and we accordingly find some fabulists deriving it from the daughter of an Egyptian Pharoah. Such figments deserve no consideration. Nor can we allow that any further consequence is conferred on them by the attempts which have been made to establish them as genuine history, and to deduce this name from any of those sources which have lately been opened to us; at least until these attempts shall have received some corroboration from a satisfactory explanation of the doubt which has been raised by Lord Lyttelton, respecting the sudden re-assumption of this name after it had for ages lain dormant.

The earliest historic records of the Irish which now exist are compilations made at a period, several centuries posterior to the appearance of the nation who introduced the appellation of *Scotish*: and hence we may at once perceive the reason why in their tasteless collections, they should speak of the national transactions, and should describe them, as referring to a people who bore the name which had for ages been common to the island, and by which, by the natives at least, it continued to be distinguished. The prescription was so ancient, that it might without great difficulty mislead a far more judicious and penetrating critic, unassisted by any advantage excepting those of which they were possessed. In short, it were not less improper to employ *verbal* criticism, with the view of drawing historical deductions from the embellished exaggerations of poetic description, than it would be to employ it as the criterion of truth when applied to these trivial, and perhaps in the present case, these unavoidable inaccuracies.

NOTE R.—page 87.

And yet this historian has been made to speak a far different language. “ And has Tacitus declared them (the Irish) “ the barbarians that posterior Roman writers declare them “ to be? Can trade and commerce *flourish* in a country of “ cannibals, of monsters, ignorant of right and wrong, un- “ acquainted with public justice, and devoid of private virtue? “ Surely no! And yet Tacitus assures us it was in his days “ considerable

“ considerable for its trade.” — “ Tacitus tells us it is a noble island, where trade is *INFINITELY* more extensive than in Britain.” *O'Halloran, Introd.* p. 346, 306. Alas then ! how mean, how frigid must the great historian appear, when compared with himself. “ *Solum cœlumque et ingenia cultusque hominum baud multum a Britannia differunt : melius aditus portusque per commercia et negotiatores cogniti.*”

This ludicrous incident will furnish us with an important hint respecting the manner in which this subject has been managed by the national writers. Ignorant of the materials, and in a great measure unacquainted with the basis on which they rest their gorgeous system, we can but ill judge concerning their conduct, how far they are justified in elevating the showy structure, how far its incongruity must be imputed to the nature of materials which are thus retained in obscurity, and enveloped in darkness. But here we may, at perfect liberty survey the whole of the process : and when we discover the wonderful effects of national prejudice, operating on such a simple scene, we may well be cautious with respect to forming any conclusions which would affect documents in circumstances so diametrically opposite. When a passage of Tacitus can be thus strangely disfigured, what liberties will not be taken with the imperfect and obscure scraps of barbarous literature ? When the Roman historian can be made to speak a language so consonant to the particular systems of our modern writers, what is there which cannot be drawn from our illiterate and *national* annalists ?

As this passage is much hackneyed, I shall here take the liberty of adding to the various senses in which it has been taken, a single observation. Tacitus here plainly refers not to domestic, but to foreign commerce : he does not speak *so much* of the superiority of the Irish, as of the more considerable intercourse of foreigners : he does not say that they visited other countries for the purpose of traffic, but he states, that their “ *harbours and ports were better known,*” not by *themselves*, it is presumed, it is meant, but “ *through commerce and the intercourse of traders,*” — *per commercia et negotiatores.*

NOTE

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 “ intercourse of traders,”—per commercia et negotiatores.

NOTE

NOTE S.—page 96.

May not the whole be summed up in the energetic language of Hume, a writer, whose prejudices against Ireland are well known, and whose account of the ancient state of this island has been so severely reprobated? With some omissions, it might, however, stand thus, consistently with the description of these Irish writers, and with truth.—“ The small principalities into
 “ which the Irish were divided, exercised perpetual rapine
 “ and violence against each other; the uncertain succession of
 “ their princes was a continued source of domestic convul-
 “ sions; the usual title of each petty Sovereign, was the mur-
 “ der of his predecessor; courage and force exercised in the
 “ commission of crimes, were more honoured than any pa-
 “ cific virtues; and the most simple arts of life, even tillage
 “ and agriculture, were almost wholly unknown among them.
 “ They had felt the Invasions of the Danes, and the other
 “ northern people;—and the only towns which were to be
 “ found in the island, had been planted along the coast by the
 “ free-booters of Norway and Denmark. The other inha-
 “ bitants exercised pasture in the open country; sought protec-
 “ tion from any danger in their forests and morasses; and
 “ being divided by the fiercest animosities against each other,
 “ were still more intent on the means of mutual injury, than
 “ on the expeditions for common, or even for private interest.”
 History, cap. IX. *init.*

NOTE T, page—107,—144.

The Author of “ Antiquities of Ireland,” now publishing, has thought proper to reprobate this discovery with a virulence proportioned to the importance of the conclusions which may be deduced from it. On this head, indeed, he is not remarkably severe: for unfortunately, through the whole of his learned work, he gives palpable proofs that he is not so much engaged in impartial historical disquisition, as employed in a PARTY publication. That such a fundamental blemish, a blemish of such material consequence, should so much de-
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preciate the value of his elaborate performance, is greatly to be regretted. And that this is the case, no further evidence is required than the practice which he has adopted of demolishing, with all his ingenuity, and by every exertion, whatever may be deemed favourable to a different system, without viewing it in any other light, than as an impediment to the establishment of his own, and as an incumbrance which must of consequence by any means be removed. If this can be effected to his own satisfaction, he takes very little pains to enquire further, as he might thence meet with fresh cause of embarrassment. The old edifice must therefore be left in ruins, and the materials indispensibly requisite, as they frequently are, for the construction of the historical system, must be condemned to neglect. The justice of these strictures might be collected from many instances; but this disagreeable policy is perhaps in none more visible than in the present circumstance.

Unacquainted as I am with the *Ogham*, and careless with regard to its origin, its different species, and other particulars equally interesting, I shall not attempt to penetrate the cloud of learned dust in which the subject has been involved. It suffices for my purpose, that there very lately was, (and probably now is) on Callen mountain, a stone similar to that delineated in the plates designed to represent it: That this stone had been placed there for some time at least before the present controversy was agitated: And, as not the smallest incident has been noticed which would intimate any suspicion of fraud, that it had not originally any reference to that controversy. The regular marks upon it are pronounced to be an *Ogham* inscription; and the resemblance to such inscriptions had not been denied.

It does not become me who do not understand the subject, neither in this place does it become those who do, to expatiate on the imperfections of the *Ogham*, and on the many difficulties and the various opinions to which it has given rise. How far soever we may proceed in this line, we are still to remember that such a barbarous mode of stenography did once exist, and was formerly in use.

Does our author find fault with the mode of decyphering this inscription which has been adopted? On this point he cannot complain

complain that he is left without materials to detect any such error. The greatest candour has been displayed, every thing has been exhibited to the world in the most unambiguous light, nothing which could tend to give satisfaction appears to have been withholden. Whether this argues deception, or a consciousness of imposition, or whether the full and explicit display of every circumstance which relates to the subject, does not evince that conviction of truth, which readily embraces every opportunity of trial by which it may be more firmly established, I shall not determine. I am only to observe, that instead of endeavouring to discover the truth, where alone the truth was to be found, it has been almost wholly evaded, by dwelling on matters, which though seemingly connected with the subject, are in discussing the point, wholly irrelevant, while those inquiries which merit the most marked attention, and which should have been, perhaps, exclusively prosecuted, are almost wholly neglected.

Long before this Ogham Inscription was discovered, the rules and the scale necessary for deciphering were laid down, and were presented to the public. Whether these rules and this scale are applicable or not to this inscription, I am not to decide. But I may suppose that they would not be used for the purpose, unless the former had appeared to be most fit to those who are skilled in this branch of Irish Antiquities: they, it is probable, applied to *that sort* of Ogham, the rules and the scale, which, before, they had learned, were those belonging to it; and they were, it is not less probable, prepared from former studies to understand of what class this Inscription was, and what was the table on which it was constructed. Of their knowledge in this line, or their error, let the event be permitted to determine.

These rules were applied to the deciphering of the Inscription. Let it be then asked, if our author has made any inquiry how far they were dispensed with for the purpose of imposition? whither they have not been strictly adhered to? or what report has been made to the public of the result of this examination? —Since then he is silent on these essential topics, we may be permitted to suppose, that the gentleman who discovered, and

who

who deciphered the Inscription, has executed the task with the requisite fidelity.

The event is well known. An epitaph in the Irish language was concealed under these secret characters.—But we are told, that if the scale and rules used are equally those belonging to the Ogham under consideration, still the language cannot be (accurately) understood: And to confirm this remark, we have drawn together the discordant testimonies of different antiquarians. Strange indeed is the inaccuracy of these gentlemen, who not only contradict each other, and who perhaps not less frequently are at variance with themselves.—Let us however repeat the inquiry into the conduct of our antiquary: to build on these testimonies were improper, because assertion classes with assertion, and we are at liberty to adopt which of the opposite *opinions* we may think proper. They must therefore be wholly rejected when they are inadequate to the end for which they were produced. Has he then shewn that the words which have resulted from the deciphering, are unintelligible, or that they are such Jargon as must necessarily be expected when viewed in any other light than as a genuine inscription? Has he attempted to prove that they are erroneously translated? Has he ventured any critical remarks on the language? Do we find any endeavour to evince, that though some of the words are known, yet others are either obsolete, or not to be understood? Or, since such a profound silence is observed, will he permit us to draw an inference similar to that which we were authorized to deduce from a similar omission of the requisite objections with regard to the rules of deciphering?

It may also be observed, that if any other method be tried than that prescribed by the scale, “it will turn to no effect, “which affords a proof that those found by this mode of deciphering, are the only true readings, for not a word of common sense, or perfect language can be otherwise obtained.” Such is the assertion of the gentleman who claims the merit of discovering this inscription; and he defends or authorizes his adoption of the connected readings which he has exhibited, by reasons which are to be judged of by those only who are versed in the subject. Instead of canvassing this matter, instead of examining the rules by which this part, as well as the rest of the process is regulated, our author contents himself with, a
timid

timid remark, that the different explications are grounded on no certain principles, and are made out by different scales of the Ogham. Peremptory assertion is, however, of little weight when opposed to assertion founded on argument; and such appears to have been the case, for we find no investigation made for the purpose of detecting the latent fallacy. And upon the whole, the arguments and the assertions which our author has advanced, are so very inappropriate, so exceedingly wide of the mark, that they might with as much propriety be transferred to any stone whatever, with any sort of marks however unlike; and they are so undistinguishing, and of such a tendency, that if they are conclusive, they would be equally conclusive against an inscription in similar circumstances, of which we had, by extraordinary means, acquired the information of its being really what was supposed concerning it.

In order to afford a further shew of argument, the probabilities arising from the mention of the name of Conan, are weighed against those to be inferred from that name being omitted; and the proportion being stated as two to three, the balance is gravely pronounced to preponderate in favour of the heavier side. I must confess that I have never regarded this science of estimating probabilities, by the rules of arithmetic, in so important a light as it is held in by others; but as it is here introduced, it may not be amiss to render justice to either party, and to allow each its proper consequence. If then we add to the inferior chances the considerations to be deduced from the traditions of the neighbouring inhabitants distinctly relative to this circumstance, and from the relation in the poem, by which this tomb has been recognized, we may safely venture to pronounce, that the scale of chance will quickly turn in favour of Conan.

In fact, this mention of the Ogham Inscription in a poem, which even though it be not allowed an antiquity so high as the eighth century, is nevertheless anterior to our antiquarian disputes, I consider as an historical proof in itself, that the Ogham, and of course the Alphabet were known in Ireland prior to the introduction of Christianity. A bard through the whole of his rhapsodical effusion may set historic truth, and perhaps probability at defiance, because his professed design is to please, through the medium of imagination. Even when he introduces histo-
rical

tical details, he too frequently intermingles them with the legends of tradition, and forfeits every claim to the confidence of the antiquary. But when the poet descends from the regions of fancy, when he copies from history, when he relates the particular and simple incidents which marked those revolutions which affected his ancestors, above all, when he stoops to minute description, to local incidents, and to those minute circumstances, by which truth is so peculiarly characterized, he is then to be regarded as an authority; and he then lays aside the privileges of the bard to assume the prerogative of the historian. Such is here the fact, and still further corroborated as it is by the recent discovery to which it alludes, this historical composition justly claims the attention due to every well authenticated record.

We are yet to attend to another exception, which closes the list of those objections (a small one indeed) to the authenticity of this Inscription, and which may be considered as unconfined to those antiquarians who are conversant in this particular study. "A single stroke," we are informed, "was sufficient to alter or bury the meaning in oblivion. Was *accuracy* to be expected" (on such an occasion, where the undertaking was level with their abilities, it most assuredly was) "from rude and barbarous Irish engravers in the third century? Or can it be imagined, that the Callan Inscription has stood almost 1500 years, in a naked and wild situation, uninjured by the tooth of time, and all the vicissitudes of a variable climate? That the great Atlantic ocean and its briny Atmosphere, have had no influence on this rock, and so far from pulverizing its surface, have rendered it unfit for vegetation?" This sentence I have inserted, that the reader may judge of it as he thinks proper: to me it appears, (if I may assume the language of Warburton) to have no weak side of sense, but to be all round completely impenetrable. If to others it does not convey a mystical meaning different from that which seems obvious to the common observer, I must express my surprize at the strange mixture of unsupported conjecture, of hypothetical and irrelevant argument, and of reasoning singularly inaccurate and inconclusive. Why, or with what pretence to sense recur, as an objection to the reality of the Inscription, to the strange and frivolous surmise that a letter or stroke might be omitted? Why without a particular examination of the stone,

which is expressly declared to be of a hard texture, speak of its surface being so far pulverized by the action of the sea as to render the inscription unintelligible? And why hazard any remark on the tendency of the ocean to render the stone *fit for vegetation*, while so many cliffs hanging over that element remain bare and unclothed?

In the course of these observations it may be remarked, that they are in a great measure negative; they are designed not so much to add to the evidences in favour of the inscription, as to do away the objections (if they can be called objections) which this learned writer has thought proper to exhibit. How far they are calculated to answer this purpose is submitted to the judgment of the reader. I have only further to observe, that if what has been advanced in favour of the mode of deciphering the inscription, and respecting the other circumstances with which it is connected, be disproved, the controversy relative to Irish Antiquities will remain in the same state as before the present dispute was agitated; while on the other hand, if it be evinced, that the inscription must be referred to the Chief pointed out in the poem, which has been the means of this discovery, the system which is here contended for, is in a very material degree confirmed and established.

Should a controversy be agitated on this subject on the points here proposed, it were very desirable that it be not branched out in such a manner, as would leave the matter so perplexed, that it must be considered as undecided.—With regard to the revolutions of the Irish language, from which the inscription would at present be supposed obsolete, I may venture to remark that after all that has been said with respect to the unfixed state of barbaric languages, and on this subject much has been said, they may not perhaps be so subject to change as the languages of more polished nations.—(See Percy's pref. to Mallet, p. 22.)—The fact which this judicious writer adduces concerning the modern resemblance, if not the identity of the Armoric and Welsh languages after a separation of so many centuries, is perhaps decisive; it is certainly more decisive, when corroborated with the sensible reasoning by which such facts are accounted for, than any self-contradictory *opinions* of ill-informed though national antiquaries.

NOTE

NOTE U.—page 114.

In such a desultory manner has the controversy relative to Irish antiquities been carried on, that we more than once find those who oppose the national writers entirely, and perhaps unknowingly at variance with each other, while each draws from his own premises a conclusion exactly the same with that which is deduced from considerations diametrically opposite. While so many declare that the ancient Irish were unacquainted with letters, *because* we have not any of their literary remains: Stillingfleet (Orig. Britann. p. 270.) argues, that *because* it was impossible any such remains could have been preserved, we cannot have any just accounts of their history. Opposition to this ill-fated system, is the point towards which every opposition, from whatever quarter it may come, is directed: and thus placed as it is between two fires, how will it be able to make any resistance!

I must here, however, take the liberty of recommending Stillingfleet's Preface as a model for future investigations on this subject. Were it considered in this light; were the same perspicuous, *open*, and manly mode of animadversion imitated, and the same unambiguous, pertinent, and *specific* replies made to the various arguments which opposite reasoners might produce; and were similar freedom and candor displayed in the prosecution of such examinations, I cannot but think that this long continued controversy would admit of a speedy and final determination.

NOTE V.—page 118.

Dr. Campbell, who appears decidedly of opinion, (like a certain Roman of old, of practice and of principles equally at variance, and in the success of his scheme equally unfortunate) that in the discharge of the office of censor, which he has thought fit to assume, by an undistinguishing prodigality, and an officious display of severity towards others, we may at length be disposed to forget those faults with which he stands equally charged,—on this subject takes occasion to observe, (Strictures, p. 44.) that “for the truth of Cox's being con-

"vinced, we have only Roddy's word; and the Knight in the apparatus to his history, is so far from discovering any such conviction, that he maintains the contrary."—The ingenious writer did not consider, that Cox could not possibly mention in his history any thing relative to an affair which happened exactly *ten* years subsequent to its publication.

What was the nature, let it be inquired, of the conviction which Cox could admit? Most assuredly, the only criterion of his judgment was the opinion which he entertained of the knowledge and the *veracity* (here combined with the knowledge) of his friend. Roddy shewed, as he says, the books, and explained their contents, and Cox must either betray his idea of the bad character of his friend, or he must have admitted a conviction, the only conviction of which he was capable.

Will it, in the last stage of scepticism, be intimated that Roddy was an impostor? To advance such a notion were preposterous. He was a gentleman it appears, of property, and if we may judge from his connexions, of reputation and character. He was, as Dr. Campbell says, "a famous collector;" and his repository was open to the inspection of his friends. By making use of their names in so open and unreserved a manner, does he not pledge, in the most unexceptionable manner, his veracity and character for the truth of his assertions? Would he write for the view of his friends, falsehoods, which they, being introduced as parties, must at once detect? What inducement must such a person have to commit his reputation in so useless a manner, when what he wrote could only serve to deprive him of the character of common honesty?—Assertions, I know, may possibly be proved by a more forcible appeal, by the loss of property, of life, or by other such penalties, incurred merely by maintaining them without having any interest in doing so: but I also know, that there exists no authority in the rules for the judgment of evidence, which would allow a rejection of the present, especially when these assertions, so strongly supported, cannot be impugned by the slightest circumstance of a contrary tendency. And I know, that were every historic fact rejected which cannot adduce a stronger support, the most authentic annals would soon exhibit a very singular appearance.

Such

Such frivolous exceptions (they deserve no better a name) would appear scarcely worthy of notice, were they brought forward on another subject. Here they make a principal part of the opposition which is to be encountered.

We well know with what avidity it is customary with controversialists, to seize on every circumstance, however slight, which they may deem favourable to their interests, with what confidence they insist as its weight, and, at the same time, with what contempt they would treat circumstances of much greater consequence, when they prove hostile to private prepossessions. While Roddy's evidence, and his ignorance are so depreciated, what stress do we not find laid on the testimony of Ware? And yet the situation of the latter would admit of much scope for the attacks of the minute caviller: what a harvest would not the knight's ignorance of the language promise to him whose inclination would prompt to expatiate on such a promising theme?

NOTE X.—page 129.

The reader is referred to Note P, which would have been placed in the margin of the text, but from an error in printing, which may be here with the most propriety corrected.

NOTE Y.—page 136.

The learned author of the "Antiquities of Ireland," would argue, that this Coemgen was a nonexistence. This is not a novel opinion of this antiquarian; it has been long since given to the public; and, as it has been animadverted on by the most respectable writer, whom the favourers of the romantic system of national Irish antiquities can at this day produce, I shall transcribe his remarks.

"We have numberless instances of the Monks in dark ages," (says Mr. Ledwich) "personifying rivers and places like the heathen mythologists.—A charge of this nature, conveying a contemptuous idea of the Irish Clergy in the earlier ages
— of

“ of the Christian Church, should surely come supported with
 “ the proper proofs. Certain I am that those produced are
 “ most unhappily selected. They stand in contradiction to
 “ history and chronology.

“ Notwithstanding the authority of all our ancient docu-
 “ ments, we are told that the Irish Monks made of the river
 “ Shannon, or Senus, St. Senanus, and of Down, or Dunum,
 “ St. Dunus, and of Kilkenny, St. Kenny! Senan, an abbot
 “ of the sixth century, undoubtedly fixed his residence in the
 “ island of Cathery (now Scatterry) surrounded by the Shannon;
 “ but that great river bore the name of Shannon, or Senus,
 “ many ages before the abbot was born. Even Ptolomy him-
 “ self, who flourished in the second century, set it down in his
 “ map. That Down, or Down-patrick, is made of a St.
 “ Dunus, is a notion equally fanciful, as no such person as St.
 “ Dunus can be found in our Calenders or Annals. In fact,
 “ the names of Kilkenny, Kill-senan, and Down Patrick, were
 “ imposed in the first ages of the Christian Church.”

O'Connor's first Letter, Collect. X, 234.

To what this gentleman has observed, I shall take the liberty
 of subjoining the following remarks.

It is rather surprizing that the learned antiquary should ad-
 duce as an argument against the existence of this St. Kevin, the
 fabulous stories which were circulated concerning his working
 minerals. There is none of the Saints of these ages in any
 country who would not, by means of this desperate expedient,
 be involved in the same predicament, however certain the con-
 trary may be from every rule of historic evidence. Our own
 St. Malachy, with the Abbot of Clairvaux, would thus be ad-
 judged mere creatures of fiction, called forth from a non-
 existence, by some moping monk, for the purpose of carrying
 on a pious deception.

Neither can any stress be laid on the different modes of spel-
 ling a name; as by proceeding on this principle, not less undif-
 tinguishing and desperate than the foregoing, both Saints and
 Statesmen would be struck out of the most authentic records,
 and be denied existence. The case appears to be simply this:—
 The poor Saint had lain peaceably in the earth for not less than

fix

six revolving centuries, during all which time, his repose was not disturbed by any of the various writers by whom his name was mentioned. About, or after the expiration of this space, the initial K, was converted (what a calamity) into—C; and the Latin *v*, a letter unknown in the Irish language (see Collect. Vol. II. p. 46) was changed, consonant to what appears to be the idiom of Irish orthographers, into *mg*. This wonderful charm at once dispels the obnoxious facts of history, acknowledged as such for some hundreds of years, and we are, through its influence, instructed, that though for this long series of time the Saint was with propriety considered as having actually existed, yet was he after all a fabulous personage;—as were the earlier heroes of Roman history, *as soon as* their names were distinguished in the orthography of Greece.

As to the etymon of his name, in which, it is affirmed, some hagiographer was mistaken, it is an argument so nugatory, as to surprize every attentive reader, and the producing it, clearly evinces a very great deficiency of others more applicable and convincing. The name, it is remarked, is a compound for the sake of forming some pretty allusions:—and yet the propriety of the allusion, or pun, which is mentioned by one of the writers, in whose accounts it occurs, is contradicted from O'Brien's Dictionary!—Has not our author, with one blow, levelled all which he was endeavouring to build?—If the Monks *formed* a name out of the Irish, (for into the Irish is the etymon resolved) they must have known its meaning, as they were, we may presume, acquainted with their vernacular language, and as the *meaning* was with them the PRIMARY, the *sound* but an INCIDENTAL consideration. Since then they did not know the origin of the name, is it not clear that they had nothing to do with that origin, and that they took it as they found it; and that it was not a fabrication, since they did not know the meaning of that which they themselves had formed?—Such is the event of that avidity to detect forgery, and to transmute into an imposition every thing whatever to which fancy or caprice may be disposed to apply these trifling and illusive exceptions. It is frequently found, (as might here, if necessary, be further evinced, in overthrowing the idea of an etymon, by a *change* of the
sound,

found, and *vice versa*) in vehement opposition to itself; it would, if indulged and generally extended, blend all truth with seeming falsehood: it here defeats its own purpose; it strongly fortifies that which it is desirous to overcome.

That the parentage of this vilified Saint should be mentioned, however portentous it may appear to a writer, who would suppose that there was no more attention paid to this point by the Irish, than by the American Indians, (who, by the bye, if they are like other barbarians, frequently recognize each other by the name of the *Son of their Parents*, as Ossian will abundantly testify) will not however appear altogether so surprizing to others who are acquainted with the passion which our islanders entertained for genealogy, and with the institutions by which that study was favoured. Letters, he will acknowledge, were at this period cultivated in Ireland, and there was, certainly among the crouds of devotees who adhered to our Saint, a sufficient number, not deficient in zeal, who would be forward to undertake a discharge of the accustomed tribute of biography.

That there was no temptation to induce the Irish Clergy to create fictitious Saints, is certain. There appears to have been no scarcity of such personages; as from their extraordinary abundance, the exclusive and appropriate appellation of the ILSE of SAINTS, was derived to this country. While there were such extraordinary swarms of these revered characters, it must be a strange frenzy, or at the least, an unaccountable caprice, which would reject these, and would call forth phantoms to be placed in their stead: and if any reason can be conjectured which would solve this singularity, it must be one of no mean account, as it will be obliged to preponderate against the PERSONAL INTEREST of the Clergy, by threatening to rob them of the honours to which they might with greater security aspire, if their claim were not thus strangely, and without reason contested. To oppose the interest of individuals would be difficult; but to persevere in an uniform and regulated opposition to the *esprit du corps*; is what will, from the body itself, be scarcely expected.

NOTE Z.—page 137.

Colonel Vallancey, with perfect gravity, and without mincing matters, informs us, that “the first colonies came from Spain, under the conduct of Ith, or Ithobaal, governor of — TYRE, whom the Phœnician history shews, was also called Malah-Afis, which name was written by the Irish, *Milesius*.” (Vol. V. p. 362.) They were, as we are in other places informed, (for this is no accidental slip of the pen, when in the course of a tedious and fatiguing disquisition, judgment drops asleep,—far, very far indeed, from so) they were thus impelled to wander in consequence of the formidable enmity, and the implacable hatred entertained against them by Nebuchadnezzar; and this the learned antiquary demonstrates (antiquarian demonstration, I suppose my reader to be acquainted with) at all due length, (Vindication, p. 302—313 *inclusive*) and ascertains in the end very much, to be sure, to his own satisfaction. Ex pede Herculem, the reader will, perhaps justly, exclaim: for surely the demonstration is not unworthy of the modern father of Irish history.

But Keating was a historian: his successor is a historical disquisitor, and of course, deals in argument. The antiquarian tyro, ambitious of being initiated into these historical arcana, may therefore enquire,—Where can we distinguish among these Islanders, that ray of civilization, which liberalizing the minds of individuals, and operating a diffusion of humanity, produced correspondent effects in the general appearance of things? Where are we to discern the steady and unvaried tenor of a regulated monarchy, the stately reserve of an aristocracy, or where the lively vigour of a popular government? In what part are we to mark the humanizing tendency of the arts, or even the honest simplicity of agriculture? To what quarter are we to look for the venerable remains of pristine refinement, the half ruined temple, or the mouldering amphitheatre, the silent and expressive testimonies to ancient magnificence and splendor, the majestic monuments of those astonishing changes, which in the effusion of ages, diversify the varied scenery of human affairs?—To such embarrassing queries, embarrassing at least in appearance, a reply has been provided, removing

removing our doubts by the effectual method of raising others in appearance less perplexing, in reality we are to understand obviously the same.—“ To this I answer, that—if the King of Great Britain *was to* send his whole navy to North America, with orders never to return, would the settlements formed by our Admirals or Captains, or by their crews, EVER produce an elegant piece of architecture; yet every man on board had seen St. Paul’s, and Whitehall: could they form a column, or mould a cornice?” *Vindication*, p. 337.

Be it then even so: we must however reserve for the castigation of some Hibernian Rudbeck, some Son of Erudition clothed with the panoply of Dulness, this inimitable parallel: he will surely pride himself in the display of the various and evanescent shades of resemblance and dissimilitude in the premises, and the still more undistinguishable differences in the profound and logical deductions; their consistency with the sapient assumptions, and their consonance with whatever he can glean of Britannic and Tyrian manners.

Though we have received on this point such ample satisfaction, drawn from the convincing efficacy of such refined comparisons, yet might it perhaps be deemed rather unbecoming to presume further in such delicate matters, especially if our attention should be directed to the gold, the silver, and the various treasures of overgrown commercial opulence, which the Tyrians *confessedly* carried with them in their flight, as well to disappoint their conqueror, as for their own gratification:

Tum celerem fugam, patriaque exedere suadet,

AUXILIUMQUE viæ veteres tellure recludit

Thesaurus, ignotum argenti pondus et auri;

— — — — — navis quæ forte paratæ

Conripiunt, onerantque auro.

VIRG.

To such a question we must, I believe, be content to reply, not as before by a parallel query, but by conjecture. To conjecture there is not any end: At present I cannot form any more plausible, (for both the Colonel, and his guide and leader on this topic, Gebelin, here fail me) or more approaching to
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the truth than a supposition, that these, with other choice treasures, may now be deposited in the moon,

As all things lost on earth are treasured there :

Or, the PULVERIZING quality of the great Atlantic, and our *briny* atmosphere, (in such alluring colours are depicted the beauties of the Hyperborean Island), may be thought not less fatal to them, than it has proved to the unfortunate Ogam Inscription, so that of neither, unless in the intellectual records of our antiquarian, and in the tale of the ancient bard by whom the latter is recorded, even a wreck can be discovered.

The reader may be assured that this is but too faithful a specimen of the antiquarian labours of this writer ; who, I sincerely believe, (such is the general tenor of his sentiments) will cheerfully abide by the judgment which should be pronounced on this test. The same or similar information is often repeated ; and it forms a link in his system which he probably considers as indispensable for its connexion, and which indeed will easily incorporate with what is but too much of a similar complexion.

Against such a mode of conducting historic researches, it is easy to conceive that an opponent to Irish history will find ample scope for objections. Accordingly advantage, to the very utmost verge of propriety, at the least, is taken of this circumstance, and the argument is in reality converted *a re ad personam*, from the subject itself, to—can the harsh, but highly merited epithet be avoided,—to the *nonsense* with which it is incumbered.

Our laborious and apparently indefatigable antiquary takes pains to connect the history of the progenitors of the Irish with the prophecies of Isaiah ; and he rejoices in the connexion : But the great cause which he would thus support, will require and can command,

Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis !

To accompany our author in the course of his erudite disquisitions, to observe the gradual expansion of his ideas, and the correspondent developement of his system, were not wholly incurious. At first he set out with stating a simple fact, and
cautious

cautious of proceeding farther into the regions of speculation than was necessary to ascertain that fact, he succeeded in his purpose, and to his success ample testimony was paid: to indulge in the wild and uncultured field of national origins, and to enter into the various and obscure ramifications of Oriental antiquities, and Oriental national connexions,—pursuits such as these next attracted his notice and solicited his attention; and having to his own satisfaction, to the astonishment of the spectators, expatiated on this obscure subject from the borders of the Euxine, to the deserts of Arabia, Egypt not being wholly forgotten, the most moderate began to hope, that the topic being exhausted, a period would at length be put to these extravagant excursions: We now, however, contemplate him once more engaged in the alluring pursuit; and extending further his scheme of Irish Antiquities, he is now exploring the systems of the Hindus, and immersed in the mysteries of the Brachmans: he has already made incursions into China and Japan, and these are very probably the prelude to a more extensive and regulated survey: from China to America, the transition is scarcely perceptible; and as the northern parts of this continent have already been in some degree visited, the copious and splendid theme of Mexican and Peruvian antiquities, will form a grand and striking termination of the comprehensive system. Thus triumphantly does he move forward; and soaring far beyond the scanty limits of his former contracted sphere, his views expanding as he rises, the stupendous scheme will then only admit of a completion, when it shall have arrived at those limits which comprehend the extent of the globe.

May not however the learned Colonel be at length complimented with an exemption from future service, after having so well acquitted himself heretofore: May he not with all reason be presented with the rod of dismissal, after having been so fortunate as to crown the whole of his labours with a discovery that we have truly and literally among us the brood of Ham, the devoted posterity of Chanaan? What notice our good neighbours of Britain may take of the discovery or to what purpose they may apply it, it rests with time to reveal: some of them, at this hour, are very willing to be the executioners of the curse which was pronounced against a portion of this devoted race. At all events,

as the Colonel has benefited his COUNTRYMEN, by making all his discoveries concentrate in one which to them may be of such momentous consideration; as he has been so extremely polite, and has with such propriety fulfilled all his complimentary professions of esteem and respect for the NATION, in which he has so long continued to reside; and lastly as he has sufficiently gratified HIMSELF by the pleasure arising from the reflexion of having been the author of such a chain of splendid and memorable discoveries;—since in all these points he has been thus peculiarly fortunate, may he not at length be persuaded to resign the field, and to leave some few laurels to those inferior heroes “who wither away without our fame!”

NOTE AA.—page 145.

The information contained in the following passage, as it comes from the highest authority, will doubtless have its effect in counteracting the erroneous ideas which have been propagated from the circulation of positions materially affecting this subject, and in silencing the objection, or rather the scruples, to which they have given rise. It is transcribed from a letter addressed to Colonel Vallancey by the respectable and well known author of the “Dissertations on the history of Ireland.”

“According to Mr. Beauford, *the most ancient and respected historians as Cormac king and Archbishop of Cashel in the beginning of the tenth century, and Tigernach who wrote the Irish Annals in the eleventh begin their histories in the fifth age without taking the least notice of any prior to that period.*—These are great mistakes and they involve greater.

“Some extracts of the Psalter of Cashel I have perused in the compilations of Ballimote. The learned Archbishop begins with the settlement of the Scots in Ireland under Heremon and Heber. He does not indeed point out the precise time of their arrival in Spain; but from the number of generations set down by him in the genealogy of his own family he shews that they must have arrived several ages before the Christian æra.

“Through your indulgence, Sir, I had the use of the Annals of Tigernach, for some months. Far from rejecting
“ the

“ the transactions prior to the Christian period, as Mr. Beau-
 “ ford asserts, he commences with the building of Eamaria,
 “ *six* generations before the *incarnation* of our Saviour. He
 “ gives us the succession of Eamanian kings to Concovar Mac
 “ Nessa, under whose patronage Irish laws were first commit-
 “ ted to writing. The learned Abbot makes mention of such
 “ heathen monarchs and princes as made the most conspicuous
 “ figure in history as well as in the times which succeeded.
 “ His accounts, it is true, are short, and appear to be a chro-
 “ nological index to a larger work compiled by himself or some
 “ others who went before him.

“ The Annals of Innisfail commence with the time of
 “ Oliol Olom the celebrated heathen king of the two Munsters,
 “ who died 172 years before the arrival of St. Patrick.

“ Argus the learned Culdee wrote his Psalter-narann two
 “ hundred years before King Cormac began the Psalter of
 “ Cashel. That writer also mentions the settlement under the
 “ Sons of Milesius.”

Our old Annalists, it appears are in a very disagreeable
 plight. If they speak they are no longer to be “ respected :”
 Should they fall short of *an extended detail*, their *profound*
silence is conclusive against the veracity and credit of their
 fellows whose plan may be professedly more comprehensive.
 If we extend our analogy from the few surviving scraps and
 compilations of Irish history to the more copious accounts of a
 neighbouring country, we shall find that it will place our estima-
 tion of the value of these writers on another and a very
 different footing. They must then be judged *solely* from their
 detailing the romance of Brutus, or from their having design-
 edly omitted it ; and their *general* credit must be appreciated
 accordingly.

It not unfrequently happens, that the most minute and tri-
 vial circumstances will, betray the real state of a matter, better
 than the most copious and elaborate representations. Thus it
 appears to be in the present affair. We have here a writer, who
 appears to be very inquisitive in his researches, and who has
 certainly a better claim than most others, to the epithet of *pro-*
found, ignorant (for, at best, it is ignorance which has thus
 transmuted a *wish* into a *fact*) even of the contents of the small
 remains

remains of Irish literature, which nevertheless as an Irish Anti-quary claim his principal study. Doubtless the many voluminous tomes which have been written on this obscure business will one day excite not a little surprize, and be the source of, perhaps general, ridicule against those who after making it the principal employment of life have contrived to remain in such amazing ignorance. Do they not bid fair to stand as exceptions to the principle, *Ex nihilo fit*, as monuments of the profusion of erudition, of diligence and of zeal which may be lavished on the most insignificant subject, while that subject, minute and confined as it is, is condemned to remain without being examined, and without being understood?

NOTE BB.—page 160.

From various quarters, there have been long preferred great complaints against the translator of Keating, who has been charged and convicted, of having used the most unwarrantable freedoms, of having corrupted in some places, and in others, of having mistaken, the sense of his author, of suppressing and interpolating as he judged proper. Many of the imputations against Keating are therefore unjust: But it has been supposed by some that his translator has been accused of not having done him “critical justice” (a soft expression) in order to form some sort of excuse for his flagrant blunders, and the ridiculous fictions which he details. I cannot however withhold my belief from the assertion of one whose credit has always remained unquestioned, and who therefore (were it for no other reason than this undisputed claim amidst the rage of personal attack, and the mutual and perhaps but too well founded retort of literary perversion) must command implicit confidence.—“It is but justice “to inform the reader that this *pretended* translator has hardly “rendered him justice *in a single period through his whole work.* “The history given in English under Keating’s name is the “*grossest imposition that has been ever yet obtruded on a learned “age.*” See OConors dissertations, p. x.

What room then is there not for an accurate translation; a work, which would I doubt not, be more serviceable to Irish antiquities than any other which could possibly be projected!

NOTE CC.—page 164.

There are few of those qualities which contribute to form the critic, more deserving the attention of some Irish Antiquaries than PRECISION. The almost entire deficiency of this is much to be regretted in the productions of some who might otherwise have had much more merit and more success than appears at present to be the case. It is painful to toil through the lumber of a common placebook (avowedly) thrown together at random and without connexion, and delivered to the public in the place of clear and digested disquisition. While precision is wanting there will unavoidably be an overflow of repetition, inconsistency and contradiction; much will be said, and nothing which will be conducive to the illustration of the particular point which is professedly to be investigated; and the subject of the writer's attention which should all along be directed to the same end, will be changing in every paragraph and page. To every one who has laboured through these singular collections or compilations, be it referred to judge whether this description fall not far short of the reality: so charged are they with a series of incoherence and opposition, and so filled with a variety of whimsical absurdity that the disgusted reader can scarcely refrain from applying to them the masterly portrait which Milton draws of the regions of confusion.

The compilers of these leaden compositions, of which like the sick man's dreams, "*nec caput nec pes uni reddatur formæ*" make heavy complaints of the coldness and indifference with which their productions are fated to meet from the people of Ireland, on whom they seem to imagine they have conferred peculiar obligations. The complaint of this singular and unexampled neglect is well timed. Had it not been so publicly preferred and so very often repeated, the learned of the neighbouring nations would be at a loss what to determine respecting the national taste. These heavy complaints of ingratitude and mortifying indifference will however determine their judgment.

In making such harsh observations, I stand in need of all the indulgence of the candid and judicious reader. They are not thus given to public view without sensations not a little painful;

painful; and the resolution to bring forward these disagreeable animadversions is the result of very deliberate consideration, and of a confidence founded on the justice of the remarks, however severe they may be interpreted. Instead of seeking for occasions for censure, I have refrained from them, and I have been desirous to make use of every opportunity which would justify a contrary language. The present state of this controversy, in short, must be my apology. The singular appearance it exhibits, the involved and contradictory views which have been given of it, have not been occasioned by the nature of the subject, or if they have thus been occasioned, the many volumes to which it has given rise, might be expected to have dissipated the confusion. The fault must therefore of necessity be among these writers, and in recurring to first principles, in order to command a just view of the subject at large, the business of clearing the ground is, in a great measure, unavoidably the business of *fault finding*. From detecting those errors which have obscured the subject, and from pointing out the causes by which it would continue to be injured, however painful the employment, however invidious the task, I could not with propriety or with justice refrain: And I am to hope that the public will regard with indulgence the predicament in which I am placed, and not judge of the feelings of the individual from the *duty* imposed on the Author. With respect to the writer to whom I have alluded, they have in a great measure anticipated my judgment; and indeed what accuracy or what information are we to expect from one who commonly is not less at variance with himself than with those by whom he is opposed?

NOTE DD.—page 165.

There is not any necessity for using argument for the purpose of convincing those who have it in their power, and who are bound by their professions to gratify the public. They confess themselves every thing alledged on the subject.

We are more than once reminded of the circumstances which affect this study; and we are urged to it without loss of time
 “before the documents we have left are lost, or rather before

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“ the few who can read and explain them drop into the Grave.” What pity it is that since these venerable remains of ancient Irish literature are thus in danger of being lost to the world, a method of insuring them the countenance of the learned and the continuance of fame as long as their merits will claim, and that method so simple as translation is not immediately adopted ! At present, as is justly confessed, “ intelligible but to a few” accessible, it may be added to still fewer “ and neglected by a “ far greater part of our countrymen, most of what is useful “ may be lost to the public.”

But what can be more explicit than the following representation, coming as it does from the highest authority, from that writer whom the public with justice regards as the prime source of information in this respect, and whose decision will be considered as conclusive and unquestionable.

“ The public will expect a knowledge of our insular state, “ not from suspected informations, from me who have been “ born in this country, or even from yourself (Colonel Vallan- “ cey) who have been born in another ; but from the historical “ matter still presented in our old books, and that in the ori- “ ginal and simple form, with a Latin or English translation “ in a separate column. This” continues the respectable Gentleman, “ is what Mr. Burke has recommended in his letter “ to you of August last. In this as well as in most other in- “ stances, the judgment of that truly great man is decisive, “ and happy will these nations be if guided by his judgment in “ greater matters. In relation to your undertaking he observes “ that you have infinite merit in the taste you have given of some “ of our Manuscripts in several of your collections ; but he adds “ *with equal justice* that—your extracts only encrease the cu- “ riosity and the just demand of the public for some entire “ pieces ;—and he further adds that—till this is done the anci- “ ent period of Irish history which precedes official records, can- “ not be said to stand upon proper authority.”

O’Conor’s third letter, Collect. Vol. IV. p. 133.

The business of original composition supersedes however that of translation. The *splendor* of the author is still preferred to the merit of being obscurely useful in the station of translator : yet perhaps self-interest may here defeat it’s own purpose ;

pose ; and indeed that this is the true state of the case I have scarcely a doubt.

Whether the rank of author be superior, or whether it must yield to, that of translator, is of but little consequence to the public. On which side the merit lies, and to which party general gratitude would be due, is a point too clear to admit of a doubt. They cannot unconcernedly see themselves so often, and in such unqualified terms, *STIGMATIZED* for want of curiosity, while that curiosity is so dexterously baffled.

END OF THE NOTES.

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THROUGHOUT *this treatise*, the reader will observe, that very little notice is taken of the *Antiquities of Ireland*, as connected with the ancient *History of Scotland*, or of the celebrated collection of poems, which have been attributed to *Ossian*. As I am now to conclude, I may apologize for the omission, by observing that it was at first my design to extend my *Inquiries* further in this line, and to make the subjects which I have mentioned the basis of a particular discourse. Unconnected with my present concern they could be introduced only as digressions, and their importance seemed to require a principal
share

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share of notice and illustration. Nor did I despair of throwing some light on these long contested, and at present intricate subjects, though much has already been anticipated. That I shall ever execute what I proposed, appears at present, perhaps wholly, improbable: But the subject of the foregoing sheets, is, as I have already observed detached from these collateral supports; it is unconnected with any thing without itself; and whatever illustration it may afford to these, it cannot, at least in the present stage of the controversies which have been agitated, be materially affected by deductions from such inferior circumstances. It is itself the principal object; to it the others are in a great measure subservient.

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E R R A T A.

THE AUTHOR regrets that so many TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS should occur in these sheets: they are in a great measure to be ascribed to himself, as his residence is at a distance from the press. Upon a revision, he has noticed the following, which are the principal, and which are indeed so very material, that in some instances, they not a little affect the sense: the reader therefore is particularly requested to advert to, and correct them. There are, it may further be observed, not a few others, which as they are in a great measure verbal, will not require to be particularly noticed.

Page 10, last line but 3, *to* same nature, *subjoin* whatever. p. 17, last l. but 4, *for* when, *read* whom.—p. 27, l. 20, *erase* in. p. 28, *note*, *after* sunt, *insert* et altæ, p. 30, l. 4, *for* as if, *read* if as, and l. 5, *erase* if. p. 36, l. 15, *after* constructed, *insert* eligibly situated,—p. 39, l. 33, *for* correction, *read* conviction, —p. 64, l. 22, *before* introduced, *insert* is,—l. 27, *for* Emissaries, *read* Missionaries, —p. 77, *penult.* *note*, *for* ad Hesperiam tendente, *read* tendente ad Hesperidas, —p. 81, last l. but 4, *for* religions, *read* religion; —last but 3, *for* was, *read* these were; —p. 91, l. 7, *for* instruction, *read* institution; —p. 92, l. 2, *for* improvement, *read* improvements; —l. 14, *after* constantly, *insert* engaged; —l. 23, *for* donachs, *read* Aonachs; —p. 98, 5 lines from the bottom, *before* difficult, *insert* less; —p. 99, l. 14, *after* by all, *insert* out; —p. 105, l. 2, *for* writers, *read* a writer; —l. 6, *for* they have, *read* he has; —l. 13, *after* invented, *insert*, or rather framed; —p. 123, l. 24, *for* we, *read* were; —p. 125, l. 20, *for* christian, *read* chieftain; —p. 127, l. 19, *for* picture to, *read* picture of; —p. 130, l. 10, *for* preposterate, *read* preposterous; —l. 23, *for* these, *read* those; —p. 137, *penult.* *for* pervusion, *read* perversion; —p. 143, l. 14, *erase* it; —p. 146, l. 12, *for* chronology, *read* genealogy; —l. 13, *for* find a view of, *read* view; —*penult.*; —*for* singular, *read* regular; —p. 147, l. 16, *for* then is, *read* there is; —p. 168, l. 32, *for* appearance of uncertainty, *read* suspicion of uncertainty; —p. 151, *penult.* *for* opinion, *read* operation; —p. 152, l. 19, *for* refined, *read* confined; —p. 154, l. 14, *after* furnishing, *erase* of; —p. 157, l. 15, *for* opuans, *read* opulans; —l. 21, *for* precedence, *read* procedure; —*note*, *for* Alahelm, *read* Aldhelm; —p. 159, l. 29, *erase* of; —p. 162, l. 27, *for* where we, *read* where are we; —p. 166, l. 16, *erase* the asterick; —l. 28, *for* unreasonable, *read* unseasonable; —p. 189, *note*, *for* Solinus, &c. *read* differt; p. 145; —p. 195, l. 2, *for* lately, *read* laxly; —p. 206, l. 4, *after* neighbourhood, *insert* of; —p. 214, l. 15, *for* has, *read* was; —p. 219, *note*, 4 lines from the bottom,

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tom, *for* efficacy *read* idiotcy ;—p. 242, l. 13, *from the bottom*,
for pontage, *read* partage ;—p. 243, l. 5, *from the bottom*, *for*
had, *read* has ;—p. 255, l. 13, *for* classes, *read* clashes ;—
p. 256, l. 5, *for* to have been, *read* here to be ;—p. 257, l. 19,
after single, *read* omission or erasure of a ;—p. 262, l. 9, *from*
the bottom, *erase* A *after* from ;—p. 263, l. 13, *for* distinguished,
read disguised ;—p. 265, l. 3, *from bottom*, *for* effusion, *read*
effluxion ;—p. 266, l. 10, *from bottom*, *for* celerem, *read* cele-
rare ;—p. 271, l. 8, *before* fit, *insert* nil ;—l. 3, *from bottom*, *for*
transaction, *read* translation.

